

*J. Keir Esq.
From the Author*

A
R E P L Y

TO

MR. BURKE'S INVECTIVE

AGAINST

MR. COOPER, AND MR. WATT,

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

ON THE 30TH OF APRIL, 1792.

BY THOMAS COOPER.

MANCHESTER.

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A

REPLY

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22

ON my return from France about a fortnight ago, I was not a little surprised to find the addrefs presented to the *Jacobins* by myself and Mr. Watt, on the part of the Constitutional society of Manchester, had been made a Subject of Parliamentary discussion. I read the debates however without the slightest Intention of noticing them publicly, conceiving that in the present State of Mr. Burke's reputation, his ridiculous fears and intemperate Inve&ctives would not furnish a sufficient reason to intrude myself on the public, in defence of Conduct which seemed to me to require no Apology. But finding the gross blunders and obvious misrepresentations of Mr. Burke adopted and retailed in some degree by a herd of parliamentary Orators, who ought at least to have known enough of that Gentleman to be cautious of following where he led the way, I have been compelled to take up the pen in justification of my Conduct and Intentions. I do this reluctantly and I shall do it imperfectly, for I have objects of more importance to myself to occupy my time and my thoughts at present, and I shall be obliged to intrench upon Moments that should be otherwise devoted.*

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* Having undertaken to justify my own Conduct upon this occasion, it was impossible to avoid doing the same respecting Mr. Watt and the Manchester Society: but I write without the Knowledge of, or any Communication with either.

On the first perusal of these debates I was amused at the unexpected importance thus given to Mr. Watt and myself, and I could not help feeling some little regret that Mr. Burke's Character was at too low an ebb for us derive much credit from his abuse. Dreaded by his friends, the blind tool of his enemies, the Marplot of every political cause to which he conjoins himself, nothing that Mr. Burke could have said would have induced me at this time to have troubled the public with one word of reply. But others having joined in this hue and cry of Ignorance and Inattention, Mr. Burke has once more the satisfaction (probably for the last time of his life) to find himself the *ignis fatuus* of a party who under his guidance will soon plunge into some political Quagmire, or the public will be strangely mistaken. For the present, however, I may venture to regard Mr. Burke's speech as a proper Text for the Comments I have to make on this occasion.—

This Gentleman is reported (in the Morning Chronicle, and General Evening Post) to have expressed himself in substance thus:—“ That there were in this country, men who “ scrupled not to enter into an alliance with a set in France “ of the worst traitors and regicides that had ever been heard “ of, the club of the Jacobins. Agents had been sent from “ this country, to enter into a fœderation with that iniqui- “ tous club, and those were men of some consideration “ here, the names he alluded to were Thomas Cooper and “ James Watt, (here Mr. Burke read the address presented “ to the Club of the Jacobins by those men on the 16th “ April). He said, this was nothing of fancy or invention, “ but an avowal, that there were Clubs in this country who “ bound themselves by a fœderation with those regicides to “ approve their conduct and act in concert with them; upon “ this he dwelt for a considerable time with much severity. “ He likewise could name others who avowed similar prin- “ ciples; for instance, Mr. Walker of Manchester; and “ and what did those people do, did they only give their “ own sentiments? No; by the answer of the Jacobins’ “ club, it appeared that those worthies of Manchester un- “ dertook, from what authority he knew not, to represent “ all England; they spoke, and were sworn into this fœ- “ deration, in the name of the people of England. This “ led him to state, that, however upright the motives of “ the Honourable Gentlemen near him might be, they “ must

“ must necessarily, in order to succeed in their object, unite themselves with some of the worst men in the kingdom.” Such are the assertions attributed to Mr. Burke, and I doubt not truly so, for they contain as much mistake and misrepresentation as could well be crowded within the same compass. It would be too hard in me to require from my old Antagonist, that his proofs should accompany his assertions: he admits no such Clause among his rules of Controversy. Perhaps he is right, and having tried the experiment at some time or other without success, he has declined the practice: he finds them probably like an ill-affected Couple, perpetually at variance when together, and therefore best kept separate. Under these Circumstances I must be content to make out the Negative, as well as a negative is capable of being made out, and shew

That this description of the Jacobins as “ a set of the worst traitors and regicides that ever existed,” is a palpable Untruth.

That Mr. Watt and myself were *not sent* from this Country expressly to enter into a Federation with this Club, altho’ I see no objection to the measure if we had been.

That the Manchester society has not bound itself by any Conduct or expression on the part of Mr. Watt or myself, to a general approbation of the Conduct of the Jacobins, or to act in concert with them.

That we did not undertake to represent all England, as this parliamentary “ Worthy ” thinks fit to insinuate—that we were not sworn into any Federation, and that we did not speak otherwise than as deputies of the Manchester Society.

Perhaps also it will not be improper or difficult to shew, that a Correspondence for the mutual Improvement and communication of political Knowledge between Societies of different Nations, so far from deserving Reprehension, is highly expedient.

That the Correspondence of the Manchester society, so far from being unprecedented, is no more than a repetition of the precedent already so honourably set by the revolution society of London.

That we are falsely charged with Sentiments and intentions hostile to the Constitution.

And that Mr. Burke is probably mistaken in supposing us the worst Men in the Kingdom, while he is alive to make the assertion.

With

With respect to the *Jacobins*, who have been the subject of so much ignorant abuse, the simple fact is this: Early in the Progress of the French Revolution, a number of patriotic Societies were formed at different places, and under different Appellations, to discuss the politics of the Day, and propagate the principles of general Liberty. One of these Societies, called the *Friends of the Constitution*, becoming numerous, rented a part of the old Convent of the Jacobins, at Paris, for the purposes of their Meetings. The discussions that took place there, and the occasional publications issued from thence, attracted the public attention so strongly, and coincided so well with the Sentiments of the People, that the Constitutional Society at the Jacobins, soon became the largest and most important of the patriotic Societies of France, and similar corresponding meetings under the same appellation of "Friends of the Constitution," were formed in most of the principal towns of the kingdom. The Jacobins, therefore (as they are called from the place of meeting of the Parisian Society) consist of a large part of the French people; a decisive proof of their Merit, and a full reply to the Calumnies of their Enemies.

Mr. Burke calls them *Traitors* and *Regicides*: what meaning (if any) he affixes to these Appellations I know not; in the common acceptation of the words, the Assertion cannot be true. The Society at the Jacobins, exercise no public function—they are not Officers of State, legislative, executive, or judicial—they have no public trust reposed in them—and they do nothing but debate political Subjects, and now and then direct the publication of a political discourse. Upon the very face of it therefore, this Assertion of Mr. Burke has either no meaning, or a false one. They cannot be *Traitors*, for as *Jacobins*, they have no post, Office or Duty to fulfil, or betray. As Individuals, they are like the component parts of all other human Societies, good and bad, and indifferent: but if the good did not greatly preponderate, they would never have experienced the support of their fellow Citizens, or the Invectives of Mr. Burke; nor would they have become the objects of hatred and dread to the despotic Governments of their European Neighbours.

Equally false or unmeaning is Mr. Burke's appellations of *Regicides*, as applied to the Jacobins. The King of the French is alive, and chooses his Ministers from among the Members

Members of this very Society—who—have not yet “*hurled* him from his Throne.”

Nor were Mr. Watt and myself *sent* from this Kingdom for the purpose of establishing any political Correspondence whatever. He left this Country upon the Commercial Concerns of the house in which he is engaged, and I accompanied him as a relaxation from a long-continued application to business here, and because I was glad of the Opportunity of visiting Paris with a Man whom I love and esteem, and whose Introductions to Society there, were the same with my own. The Circumstance of our being at Paris, occasioned the Deputation to be sent to us from Manchester, and we had been there near a Month before we received it. This is no farther worth notice than to shew the Inaccuracy and systematic exaggeration of the Man who has undertaken to accuse us.

We are charged with “ having bound ourselves by a Fœderation with these Regicides, to approve their Conduct, and act in concert with them.”—Thus much it is true we have said, viz. “ Our society will be happy to join its efforts to yours in propagating those important principles of Liberty, which alone can fix on a firm and immovable Basis the Empire of Peace, and the happiness of Mankind.” There is no other Sentence in the address to which this charge can possibly allude. Such is the *specific* purpose for which we have undertaken to act in concert with the Jacobins. Mr. Burke, who complains so grievously of this federation, is therefore by his own Confession the declared Enemy of all attempts to “ propagate the general principles of Liberty, and promote the empire of peace and the happiness of Mankind.”

Nor did we undertake to represent all England—Nor did we speak in the Name of the People of England, but directly otherwise—Nor were we sworn in any Manner, or into any fœderation whatever—These Accusations are evidently the effects of a disturbed Imagination: they are mere *Burkeisms*; Affertions without proof, and invective without Argument. There is no evidence whatever, (nor *can* there be any) that we spoke any thing at the Jacobins but the words contained in the address we have published, in which there is not one syllable in support of the Affertions thus hazarded by Mr. Burke, but an express declaration that we addressed the society of Jacobins merely as the Deputies of the

the Manchester Society. The Answer of the President, and the Letter to the Constitutional Society here, we give as we received them, not conceiving ourselves at Liberty (even if we had been willing) to make the slightest alteration, or in any way responsible for the Sentiments contained in them. But in neither of those papers can I find any thing like proof of Mr. Burke's Accusations. This charge, therefore, (if it be correctly reported) is a gross Imposition on the House of Commons in which it was delivered—an attack upon the Character of Mr. Watt and myself, which no conduct of ours has authorised—and neither more nor less than a *flagrant Untruth*. I call upon Mr. Burke to contradict or to prove these Assertions ascribed to him: and if (even in his own Opinion) he has any Character of Veracity to lose, to vindicate himself from this public Impeachment of it. Perhaps, however, this "right honourable Gentleman" will shelter himself under the fancied Consequence of his own Character.—Perhaps he regarded these Assertions as mere figures of Speech—fictions of oratory—specimens of elegant Inve&tive, in which he thought himself at Liberty to indulge at the expence of the more vulgar quality of Truth—or, perhaps, feeling how he himself would have acted in our Situation, he unluckily measured us by his own Standard, and risked the Charge.

This outcry against the Existence and mutual Correspondence of political societies, foreign and domestic, is no slight argument of their Utility. It amounts to proof that this means of communicating Knowledge to the Public, is likely to be attended with beneficial effects to the best Interests of Mankind, or it would not be an object of so much alarm to the pensioned Advocates of Aristocracy. The People now see the great Importance of political enquiries, and extensive influence of the Maxims of Government, which operate directly or indirectly on every moment of our Existence, and every action of our Lives. They perceive much to learn, and much to unlearn on the question of civil government; they expect as their right, a free access to all peaceable means of Information, and exclaim with reason, "we will be kept in the trammels of implicit belief no longer."

However plain and simple the true principles of government may be, when divested of that garb of complication and mystery in which State-craft has enveloped them, it is ^{certain}

certain that they are not yet fully settled among those who profess to write, and reason on the Subject. The best political writers of the present day, among the English and French, are not agreed on points of considerable moment; and Mr. Burke himself has taken no small pains to magnify the difficulties attending a branch of Knowledge of which, he dreads while he promotes the public discussion. Difficulties there are; such as ignorance and artifice have created: but if they exist, (of whatever kind they may be) why throw obstacles in the way of enquiry, and deny the means of removing them? At any rate Mr. Burke, whose time for two years past, has been chiefly occupied in publishing discourses of political mysticism, ought to be the last to cry out against any Source of Information on a subject which he has laboured so indefatigably to obscure.—Equally aware, that public ignorance is the Interest of Courts, and public Information the Interest of the People, the patriotic Societies of France and England, profess the same general principles of equal liberty, and have precisely the same general object in view, viz. the Improvement and Propagation of political Knowledge. In France, as is natural they discuss the temporary occurrences of their own Country; We, those of ours; but the same Science and the same Principles are equally applicable to both. These Societies, in each Kingdom, entertaining therefore the same general design of extending the bounds of Knowledge on the most important of all Subjects of enquiry, can it be deemed improper or unbecoming, that they should mutually communicate for a common purpose? Is there any impropriety in the *philosophical* Societies of London, Paris, or Stockholm, corresponding for the Improvement of Chemistry, or experimental Philosophy? On the contrary, do they not all court Correspondencies as the most effectual means of diffusing Information? Why then should societies instituted for the promotion of *political* Knowledge, be debarred from the common means of Improvement? If it be a Crime to enlighten the People upon the Subject of Politics, why not say so at once, and take that ground of Accusation: if it be no crime, why deny the common methods of Communication permitted and adopted in every other branch of human Science? If (with respect to Mr. Watt and myself) it be said that our Correspondence with the Jacobins was with other views, and for other purposes of seditious complexion,

I appeal to the facts, I deny the charge, and I challenge the proof. Let him who shall hereafter make the accusation, and shrink back from the Proof thus called for, take the only reply I shall condescend to give on such an occasion, *Mentiris impudentissime.*

But after all, why this anxiety among the Governments of Europe (our own among the rest) to stop the progress of Knowledge, and cut off the sources of political Information? Why this dread left the People (the *Swinish multitude*, as their friend, Mr. Burke, calls them) should think too much, and reason too much on their own rights, and their own Interests? left the deep veil of mystery, which State-craft has thrown over the science of Government, should perchance be withdrawn, and the transactions of Court-Politics be exposed to public Observation? If the foundations of these gaudy superstructures be unsound, this Conduct is easily explained: but if Governments do actually mean well, if their principles and actions will bear examination, why this general dread of Investigation? Why give room to suspect that "Men love darkness rather than light—because their deeds are Evil."

This Correspondence of the Manchester Society with the Jacobins, is not only justifiable as being nothing more than a pursuit of the same means which every other European Society has adopted to improve, and extend its common object of Investigation, but is supported by Precedents directly in point, long known to the public, and which have hitherto excited no fears or apprehensions that I have heard of, except in the visionary brain of Mr. Burke, the *communis Rixator* upon these occasions. The late Dr. Price, and the present Earl of Stanhope, in the Year 1789, conducted a Correspondence exactly of the same kind, (and containing the same Sentiments with those expressed by Mr. Watt and myself in our address,) on the part of the *Revolution Society of London*, with the national Assembly of France, and various patriotic Societies of that Kingdom. This correspondence has since been extended to the following *Jacobine Societies*, viz. THE FRIENDS OF THE CONSTITUTION at Paris, Aix, Alais, Arras, Auxerre, Amiens, Bourdeaux, Brest, Bayonne, Bourges, Bergarac, Calais, Chalon-sur-Saone, Cressey, Cherburg, Clermont-Ferrand, Chartres, Cognac, Dijon, De Marrennes, Grenoble, Honfleur, Havre, Hieres, Lisle, Lisiere, Limoges, Largon, La Rocheille, L'Orient, Montargis,

targis, Montpellier, Marseilles, Nantes, Niomes, Orleans, Pontoise, Poitiers, Rouen, Rennes, Strasburg, St. Servan, Tours, Toulouse, Versailles, Valence and Vire; and the Letters to and from all these societies have been regularly printed for public Information.—Moreover the French Colours usually displayed at the dinners of the Revolution society in London, are a present from some of these Jacobin societies, and, (as I understand) the British flag which hangs up in the hall of the Jacobins, at Paris, combined with the Colours of France and America, was a present from the Revolution society: emblems in each Country of mutual amity and good will.

Had Great Britain and France been at enmity together when these Correspondencies took place, (as Great Britain and America were, when Mr. Burke corresponded with Dr. Franklin and Mr. Laurens), something might have been urged against the propriety of this Intercourse; altho' the communications of private societies for the purpose of improving the Theory of political Philosophy, would have been hardly reprehensible under any Circumstances; and in comparison of Mr. Burke's Correspondence on the occasion just mentioned, would have been highly expedient and praiseworthy. But fortunately for both Countries, Great Britain and France are not at war together, but at peace. For their mutual good, and for the good of Mankind, may they ever continue so! Our Communication with the Jacobins therefore, has not one tint of the suspicious Complexion of Mr. Burke's Correspondence above noticed. But the infatuated forgetfulness, the insolent inconsistency of this man, are now almost proverbial: he has long ceased to blush for himself; let his friends, if he has any, blush for him.

The System of the former Court of France (like that of every court unchecked by the influence of the People), was War, and even in this Country we have been absurdly and impiously taught to speak of the French as of our *natural Enemies*. As if the benevolent Author of nature had purposely sown the Seeds of perpetual discord between his common offspring! But the Idea is blasphemy: if we have been enemies, we have been, not natural, but artificial Enemies. By nature we are brethren as well as neighbours; by the intrigues of courts and of ministers, we have been mutually beasts of prey. The French, first of all, saw the folly and the wickedness of this long-continued System of periodical

hostility and snarling peace. They have said, "We will be
 " your enemies no longer; it neither suits our Interest or
 " our Inclination: we see at length, that in this mutual
 " State of animosity between nations, the authors of
 " our evils are the gainers by them, while the Sword, and
 " the famine, and the pestilence, are the wretched Lot of
 " the deluded People."—Much to their honour the Revolution Society of London, were the first to offer their Congratulations to the French on the adoption of this System of Benevolence and Peace. And much as I think to their honour, the Society of Manchester have trodden in the same path, and expressed the same Sentiments. But if it be a *Crime* to wish earnestly for "the fraternal Union of all Men; for the Empire of Peace, and the happiness of Mankind," the Manchester society and their Deputies, must plead guilty to the Charge. To me, however, it appears "astonishing" (in the Language of Dr. Price, and the Duke de la Rochefaucault, respecting the Correspondence between the Revolution society of London, and the French patriotic Societies*), "if any person who has within him a Spark of Zeal for Liberty and human happiness, should be able to read these papers without delight. We see in them the dawn of a glorious day, (when should sentiments congenial to those of France prevail in Britain), two nations at the head of the world, convinced of the Folly of War, and laying aside Jealousies, shall embrace each other, and form a fraternal and intimate union; not for the vile purposes of Avarice and Conquest, but to spread the Knowledge of human rights, to extend the blessings of Justice and Liberty, and to promote *Peace on earth, and good-will toward Men.*"

Such are the only objects, so far as I know of the patriotic societies of France or England, which I have at any time frequented, or with which I am connected, and they are in fact, the only objects intended or expressed in the address which gave so much offence to Mr. Burke, and which received the panegyric of his invectives.

But what must be the Complexion of that Man's mind, who can be irritated to a degree of political Insanity at these expressions of Friendship and Benevolence towards our Neighbours and Fellow Creatures? Who tickles at the Thought of perpetual peace and fraternal Union between rival

* Appendix to Dr. Price's Discourse on the Love of our Country. p. 20.

rival Nations. Who entertains no Sentiments of Compassion, but for the rich and the great, the Kings, and the nobles of the earth! Who can contemplate without emotion, the prospect of Bloodshed and Devastation among Millions of the devoted Victims of Pride and Despotism, and who bewails with feminine Lamentation, the loss of a nickname or a Gewgaw, the broken play things of a puerile Nobility! Who seems to regard the *people* as fit only for the Goad, and the Whip, and the Spur; for Labour without Intermission, in Peace; for slaughter without Commiseration, in War—And who, blaspheming against human nature itself, impiously terms the great Mass of Mankind, *the Swinish Multitude*!

If the PEOPLE, in this *right honourable Gentleman's* opinion, be Swine, no wonder at his antipathy to any Society which professes to regard the rights of the People. Rights whose existence he expressly denies, and whose defenders he treats as the friends of Anarchy and Confusion, and the disturbers of the peace of Society; the cant terms of aristocratic abuse against those who assert the Rights of Man.—But in contempt of Mr. Burke, I appeal to the PEOPLE; whom in perfect opposition to him, I regard as the only class of the community worth appealing to; and I call upon them to judge what credit is due to this Man's accusations, and what is the Complexion of the Cause that requires his Support!

Thus much, the unexpected notice taken of our correspondence with the Jacobins, has induced me to say in justification of Mr. Watt and myself, as Deputies from the Manchester Society. I cannot help regarding it as a disgrace, not to us, but to the Nation, that any Circumstances should have made a justification necessary. It remains only respecting this part of my Subject, to make a few observations on the apparent irregularity of the parliamentary discussion it occasioned.

The Constitutional Societies of Great Britain and France, (the Jacobins among the rest) are not public but private societies. They interfere in no public business any farther than to express their Opinions of public Transactions—they exercise no public functions—they are no part of the legislative, executive, or judicial powers of either Country—they are neither more nor less than amicable meetings of Individuals, assembled to discuss political Questions and occurrences, and to communicate to each other and the public, political Knowledge; neither

ther acting nor arrogating beyond their right, as Individuals of doing the same. If a Petition, for instance, were presented to the House of Commons from the Constitutional society of Manchester, or the Revolution society of London, I apprehend it could not be received; such bodies not exercising any public function, nor being officially cognizable under those Appellations.

Being no Member of the Legislature, I do not pretend to be conversant in the forms of parliamentary proceedings, but I cannot help thinking at present, that it is somewhat irregular to notice with Reprehension in the House of Commons,* the Actions of private societies, or of Individuals, who, if they have done wrong, can be punished by the Laws of the Land, and who, if they cannot be punished, *have done no wrong*; for the Laws of every Community are the only measure of public right, and public expedience. The Attack upon Mr. Watt and myself, therefore, in the House of Commons, seems, in the first place, to have been irregular, for our actions were not within the Cognizance of that house, but of the Laws of our Country. 2dly. It was imprudent in those who introduced it, and in the house who permitted it; for it exposed the Imbecillity of the Proceedings, and the unmeaning waste of time occupied by the debate. 3dly. It was unjust, because the house ought not to have permitted an accusation against the Conduct of Men who had done nothing contrary to any known law of the Land. If our actions were illegal, why not direct the Attorney general to prosecute? If legal, why accuse us? If the penal Code be not already sufficiently voluminous—if it be too scanty to reach the Offence, why not add to the Sanguinary Catalogue of Pains, Penalties, and Prohibitions?

We are farther accused (in common with several of the patriotic Societies of Great Britain) of no less a design than that of overturning the British Constitution.

What the Designs of those Societies are, I know not, except from their published resolutions and declarations, in which I cannot discover the slightest proof of any such Intention. The chief, and indeed almost the only object of every such Institution with which I am acquainted, is, such a Reform in the parliamentary Representation of Great Britain, as will ensure to the People that the House of Commons shall

* Unless where a parliamentary Impeachment, or a prosecution by the Attorney General is directed; Which were not even hinted at in our Case.

shall uniformly speak their Sentiments. At present, that house does not consist of the Representatives of the *people*, but of Lords and rich Land-holders; of Ministers and Borough Mongers, who “buy and sell Seats in Parliament “as openly and notoriously, as Stalls for Cattle at a Fair.”— who buy and sell the people, their nominal Electors, as if they were Slaves appurtenant to the Soil—who treat them as the worst species of Slaves, buying and selling their voices and inclinations; dealing in the Consciences of their Tenantry, as a fair object of traffic, and who profit without remorse, by the wreck of public Virtue! Such (in great part) is a British House of Commons: such are the herd who wallow in the Sunshine of Ministerial Approbation, and fatten upon public Corruption—who cry out against all reform, as dangerous to the State, because it is dangerous to their own System of Iniquity—who ignominiously treat as disturbers of the public peace, all those who call upon them to cleanse this *Augean Stable*.—Who are aware of the Notoriety of the facts so repeatedly charged upon them, and are content to vomit forth in reply, their indiscriminate abuse, and lull the public Clamour by disgusting panegyrics on their own immaculate Integrity! But the people are nauseated with this repeated Soporific. They are alive to the necessity of some decisive Alteration. Having introduced the question of Reform till it became a periodical jest, and having experienced so frequently, the insolent Censure, or sovereign Contempt with which their humble Petitions have been treated, *they may in time* become weary of a Practice which they have so repeatedly and ineffectually tried; they may demand hereafter what they petition for now; and at some moment of intolerable provocation, they may be induced to regard their self-elected assembly of Representatives, as a “house of ill-fame,” and in the energetic language of Mr. Burke’s prophecy, they may “be tempted “to go to work the shorest way, and *abate* the Nuisance.

At present there is reason to believe, that about 70 or 80 Persons are enabled to send an efficient Majority of Members to Parliament, so that the House of Commons is in fact, the Representative of this virtuous band of aristocratic electors. It is not true, therefore, that this Government is a Government by King, Lords, and Commons, for the commons or people, are *not* represented.—“The Commons of England in Parliament assembled,” is a phrase false and absurd,

absurd; it should be the deputies of the Aristocracy in Parliament assembled! If a wish to reform this manifest abuse, be the same with an intention to overturn the British Constitution, I most certainly admit the charge; but I am seriously and decidedly of Opinion, that in the present Circumstances of this Country, no Man can be justified in going farther than a complete and effectual reform in the Representation of the People, and the duration of Parliaments. These are my Sentiments: these are the Sentiments of my political friends, whether in or out of the patriotic societies of this Country, with which I am connected. If my conduct or opinions shall again be deemed worthy of public Notice, I hope, after this declaration, I shall not again be pestered with the shallow, malevolent fictions of my adversaries, nor accused without proof, of meditating designs which I thus publicly disavow.

It is with doubt and hesitation that I can bring myself at any time to coincide with Mr. Burke's opinions, aware, as I am, of his habitual obliquity of thinking, and knowing his perpetual tendency to dress up error in the meretricious garb of eloquent declamation, and impose her upon the world for truth. At present, however, I cannot help agreeing with him, that "the burthen of proof lies heavily on those who "tear to pieces the whole frame and Contexture of their "Country.—That, in their political arrangements Men "have no right to put the well being of the present generation wholly of the Question.—And that a fore and "pressing evil must be removed, and a great and unequivocal good must be probable almost to a certainty, before "the well being of a number of our fellow Citizens is paid "for a revolution. *** If ever we ought to be ~~Economists~~, "even to parsimony, it is in the voluntary production of "evil. Every revolution contains in it something of evil."

These are, without doubt, Circumstances of serious Consideration, fairly applicable to the present State of this Country, and which wise and temperate men will not fail to weigh. They speak strongly in favour of an amendment of the present System rather than a Revolution, of which the evil would be grievous, extensive, and inevitable.

In fact, what is right in Theory is one thing: what is expedient in Practice, is frequently another. As a question of true Theory and abstract discussion, the Controversy respecting the political Utility of privileged orders, is nearly over.

over.* Among those who have attended to the subject impartially, it is impossible to deny that an hereditary Monarchy, an hereditary Nobility, hereditary Legislators, and hereditary Judges, are indeed excellently well calculated to make the happiness and welfare of the many, subservient to the pride and emolument of the few, but have a decided tendency to counteract the great object of all Government, *the good of the People*. Abstractedly considered, or with reference to a new-formed State, there is good reason to regard them as Incumbrances, absurd and useless, dangerous and unjust.

Suppose a Constitution about to be new-formed, and that of Great Britain proposed as the Model. Such a proposal, I believe, was made at one time in America, and is actually made at this moment by one part of the French Malecontents.

The first absurdity that strikes one, on the face of such a Proposition, is the Division of the nation (i. e. the People) into three distinct Classes or Corporations; of which the first shall consist of one Man, the second, of a few hundred Men; and the third, several Millions! While there is but one order of Men in the Nation, viz. the People, there can be but one common Interest, viz. the Interest of that sole order, i. e. of the Whole: precisely the great object for which civil Government is adopted and submitted to. But if two other orders are created, disjoined from the Mass of the People, with exclusive privileges and separate Interests, transmissible in perpetuity by hereditary Succession, the object of Government in this case will be, not the one great and simple Interest of the Nation or People, but the complicate and opposite Interests of the three separate orders.

The respective Interests of these three orders will be attended to, in proportion to the degree of Power and Influence assigned to each of them by the Constitution. If the making of the Laws, the expounding the Laws, the executing the

D Laws,

* In our Country, *Milton*, *Harrington*, and *Sydney*, have treated expressly on the danger and Inutility of Monarchy; but the subject has been much more profoundly, as well as popularly discussed within these two Years. Those who will take the trouble of perusing the "Essai sur les Privileges," and the Sequel to it (*Qu'est-ce que le Tiers-Etat*) of the *Abbe Sieyès*, *Paine's* "Rights of Man, part 1 and 2," *Barlow's* "Advice to the privileged orders," and *O'jewald's* "Review of the Constitution of Great Britain," will find almost every thing that the Subject affords on one Side of the Question. The "Essai sur les Privileges," has been translated into English; the other French pamphlet above mentioned, well deserves to be so.

Laws, and the naval and military force for the defence of the State, be committed to any *one* of these orders, it is obvious that the Interest of the other two, will be made subservient to this third.—If these public Offices or Functions be divided between any *two* orders, the Interest of the remaining Class will be made Subservient to that of the other two. This is so obviously probable, not to say inevitable, from the natural tendency which every Man, and every body of Men have to promote their own Interest in preference to others, that it needs no Confirmation by Reference to Fact. In Great Britain the Monarch inherits the exclusive privilege of managing the army and the navy; of making war and peace; of forming one third part of the Legislature of the Country; and of choosing the judicial and executive Magistrates of the Kingdom. The Nobility of this Country inherit, among other Privileges, that of sitting in their own right as hereditary Legislators, and hereditary Judges, and form another third part of the Legislature of the Kingdom. And the People (the Millions) are partly induced, and partly compelled to content themselves with the Semblance of choosing the remaining third part of the Legislature, which decides, or seems to decide on the Supplies! Under these circumstances it is almost superfluous to ask which are the Interests most likely to be first attended to? The answer, however, to this Question, will be incomplete without a reference to the Civil List, the red book of places and Sinecures, the article of secret Service Money, the long, sad Catalogue of national Taxes, the public Debt, the Laws of Inheritance, and the penal Code.

The next inconsistency obvious in such a Scheme is, that the People, who would be naturally desirous that the government should be conducted with a single eye to their good, since they could have no other Inducement to adopt a Government at all, should commit the Charge of it to Persons whom they cannot change for misconduct, and over whom they renounce all controul! If I want my business well managed, for my own benefit, I preserve my right of changing my Servants and Agents whenever they become faithless or negligent—but if I make them independent of me, every body can foresee that my affairs will either be neglected in general, or conducted not for my benefit, but for theirs. Such an instance of absurdity, therefore, hardly ever occurs in the common practice of life. But how

much

much greater the absurdity of doing this, with respect to the momentous business of a nation! Yet such is the case where privileged orders are irrevocably admitted into a state with exclusive titles to public offices and functions, and are made permanent by hereditary Succession.

Another objection to these Establishments is the expence of them. Labour is the price which Nature has ordained that Man should pay for Subsistence and Comfort. "By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." As one part, therefore, of the necessary evils attendant upon civil Government, is the expence of it, the People should take care, for their own Sakes, not only to exclude all sources of extravagance, but have as few means of expence as possible. Where this Business has been left to the People, as in America, they *have* taken care to confine State-expenditure within the bounds of Moderation, "the whole expence of the federal Government of America,* founded on the system of representation, and extending over a Country nearly ten times as large as England, is but 600,000 Dollars, or about £.135000 sterling." In Great Britain, where the business of Government has not been left to the people, but chiefly to the hereditary functionaries of the Kingdom, the Sums levied annually for public purposes, including the Items enumerated by Sir John Sinclair,§ in his history of the Revenue, amount at present to a Sum not less than 25 *Million sterling*. It will admit of a great deal of Controversy, how much of this is attributed directly, and how much more indirectly to the influence of the privileged orders operating perpetually on the measures adopted, for about a century and a half past: but as I have neither time nor information necessary for the purpose, I shall leave this to the consideration of others, and content myself with one fact only in illustration of this objection. The Income of his Majesty George the third, which has been regarded as not more than necessary for the maintenance of Kingly Dignity, may be reckoned, one way or other, at twelve hundred thousand pounds annually. Supposing the average price of Labour to be a Shilling a day throughout Great Britain, his Majesty's expences consume the perpetual daily Labour of above Sixty Thousand Men. With us, there can be no question about the Matter, but if such an establishment

* Rights of Man, part 2, p. 38. § part 2, p. 164.

lishment were proposed to a People about to frame a new Constitution, it might well be asked, whether such public Services as are regularly performed by the Kings of Great Britain, are equivalent to the inconvenience of setting apart the daily labour of *sixty thousand* of the people to repay them. It may be observed, that by the 22 Geo. III. c. 82, there is a regular distribution of the Civil List income; in which it appears that £.32,955 is appropriated to pay the Salaries of the Lord Chancellor, the Speaker of the House of Commons, and all the Judges of England and Wales, which, together, amount to that Sum; and 89,799l. 2d $\frac{1}{4}$ is appropriated to the *menial servants* of his Majesty's household. Such (upon parliamentary authority), is the comparative estimate in this Kingdom of Utility and Show!

Another Absurdity in the System of hereditary functionaries is, that it manifestly implies the Possession of Qualities not hereditary, but personal—not transmissible by descent, but acquirable only. " As the exercise of Government requires talents and abilities, and as Talents and Abilities cannot have hereditary descent, it is evident that hereditary Succession requires a belief from man to which his reason cannot subscribe, and which can only be established upon his Ignorance; and the more ignorant any Country is, the better it is fitted for this Species of Government." To which may be added, that it requires not only Talents and Abilities, but Knowledge, Experience, and Integrity; which in the case of hereditary Succession, are left entirely to the production of chance. In our Country we see that the business of the nation is actually done by those who owe nothing to their Ancestors, but have raised themselves into those Situations which the Idleness and Ignorance of the Titled orders incapaciate them from filling.

The System of privileged orders and hereditary functions, not only presumes à priori, and without experience, the perpetual succession of Virtue, Knowledge, and Abilities, in cases where there is a bare possibility of Existence, but it implies and commits itself upon the existence of these qualities directly in the teeth of fact and Experience, for we know too well, that Kings and Nobles are not exempt from Childhood, and Disease, and Weakness, and Vice.

The admission of hereditary Functions in a State, is further absurd and inconsistent, because it implies a perfect absence of almost every Motive which will induce Men to make

make the necessary Acquisitions, or use the requisite Industry in the Stations they are born to fill. If a man seeks for honour or emolument, he will have an adequate Motive to use the necessary means of obtaining them; and where these are fairly held out as the Temptation and reward of extraordinary Talents or great Exertions, those who seek to acquire, will take care to earn them.—Take away these Inducements by giving them in advance, and you stop the growth of Abilities and Knowledge, and you nip Wisdom and Virtue in the bud. Nobility has earned, in its Cradle, the rewards due to a well spent life, and a long course of public Services; and no motive to acquirement remains but the Reputation which may arise from the singularity of the Attempt. Even this solitary Motive is inefficient, and Fame itself loses half its influence upon Nobility; for the hypocritical Semblance of public attention and respect, they enjoy without it, and the appearance is to them equivalent to the reality. In the *common* course of events therefore, public virtue can hardly be expected to spring forth among the Privileged orders, but from the rank Soil of impoverishing Dissipation, or insatiable Ambition.

But farther, Kings and Nobles are not only placed in a Situation which precludes the Operation of all the common motives to good and to great Actions, but they are almost inevitably brought up to an habitual indulgence in Luxury and Vice. With every person around them paying, even to their Childhood, that homage and respect which would be almost idolatrous to the maturity of Abilities or Virtue—with every appetite pampered, every wish indulged, every gratification eagerly procured—with no business but their pleasure, no motive to exertion but the indulgence of their passions—hearing in the Society they frequent, and observing in the common course of life, that laborious occupations are considered as disgraceful, and that Industry is beneath the Attention of Nobility—that Learning and Knowledge will just qualify their possessors to become the obsequious Tutor or dependant Companion of some Dunce of Quality—and feeling that they themselves are already in possession of every enjoyment for which the great mass of Mankind are perpetually and anxiously toiling—Thus educated, what is to be expected from them but an habitual Indulgence of vicious Inclinations, and an habitual disregard of public Opinion? And in what nation upon earth,

earth, I ask, has Nobility disappointed this common Expectation?

From hence arises *another* most serious objection to hereditary Titles, Privileges, and Orders—they are from their nature and tendency, and they are known to be from Fact and Experience, the Hot-beds of Luxury, Idleness, and Immorality.—Happy for Society if these baneful Qualities could be confined to the Orders thus privileged. But of these (unfortunately) is composed “the fashionable World.”—Alas! is it necessary to ask any man of common Sense, and common Observation, what are the fashions of “the fashionable world?” What are the Characteristic Actions and Demeanour of that Syren Class of Society, who proverbially controul the manners of the day, and thus fatally allure the voluntary homage of public Imitation? It is too notorious that here is the fountain-head of luxurious Ostentation, and vicious Indulgence; whose noxious streams have infected the great mass of the Community, corrupting private morals and domestic enjoyment; creating the melancholy temptation to unwarrantable parade, and glopping over the Deformity of Vice itself, by the prevalent example of those, who, unblushingly monopolize all the nominal attributes of consummate Virtue.

Some years ago, there was a *Toast* in vogue among the fashionable World, to this purpose, “ May elegant Vice prevail over dull Virtue,”—perhaps it is still in repute, for Mr. Burke, (the professed advocate of the privileged orders) very feelingly laments the Loss of “ that Sensibility which “ ennobled whatever it touched, and under which *Vice lost “ half its evil, by loosing all its Grossness.*” On this Text let the reader make his own Comment!

The System of privileged orders, includes, moreover, the manifest absurdity of distinctions not founded on, but directly opposite to those of Nature. Strength, and Wisdom, and Talents, and good Dispositions—superior Capacity of Body or Mind—Superior Industry or Activity, do, and ought to create proportionate distinctions, and to bring with them their own reward. These are the differences, and the only favourable differences which the God of nature has thought fit to create among his Offspring, and their tendency is manifest to promote the good of Mankind, because the common evidence of their existence is the beneficial effects they produce. But man has thought fit to create, and submit to other distinctions, of a different complexion, and

an opposite Tendency; and the Kings and Nobles of the Earth imposing upon the Childhood of Society, have cunningly substituted Titles for Qualities, and Names for Things, and set up themselves and their posterity as the perpetual Idols of public Adoration.

The System of hereditary Monarchy and hereditary Nobility, with its concomitant attribute of hereditary Legislation, is moreover highly absurd, as involving other positions of manifest Inconsistency. If a People divide themselves into three Classes, and commit the Privilege of making Laws, and declaring the national Will to one Man and 500 Men, and the Representatives of 5 Million of Men jointly, they declare by the act itself, not merely that the few shall be equivalent to the many, but that the nation is not the nation—that the will of the Majority shall not be the will of the Majority—and they ordain in this unnatural System of political Arithmetic, that one and five shall make five thousand! The *Abbé Seyes* has expressed himself so well on this Subject, that I shall transcribe the Passage. “ Au-
“ jourd’hui nous avons non seulement une Constitution,
“ mais si l’on en croit les Privileges elle renferme deux dis-
“ positions excellentes et inattaquables. La premiere c’est
“ la division par ordres de Citoyens; la seconde, c’est l’égalité
“ d’ influence pour chaque ordre, dans la formation de la
“ Volonté nationale. Nous avons bien assez prouvé déjà
“ qu’alors même que toutes ces choses formeroient notre
“ Constitution, la nation seroit toujour maîtresse de les
“ changer. Il reste à examiner plus particulièrement la
“ nature de cette *Égalité d’Influence* que l’on voudroit at-
“ tribuer à chaque ordre sur la Volonté nationale. Nous
“ allons voir que cette Idée est la plus absurde possible, et
“ qu’il n’y a pas de Nation qui puise rien mettre de pareil
“ dans sa Constitution.

“ Une société politique ne peut être que l’ensemble des
“ Associés. Une Nation ne peut décider qu’elle ne sera pas
“ la Nation; ou qu’elle ne le sera que d’une Manière; car
“ ce seroit dire qu’elle ne l’est point de toute autre. De
“ même une Nation ne peut statuer que sa volonté commu-
“ ne cessera d’être sa volonté commune. Il est malheureux
“ d’avoir à énoncer de ces propositions dont la simplicité
“ paroîtra naïfse, si l’on ne songeoit aux conséquences qu’on
“ veut en tirer. Donc une Nation n’a jamais pu statuer
“ que les droits inherens à la Volonté commune, c’est à dire

“ à la

“ à la pluralité, passeroient à la Minorité. La Volonté commune ne peut pas se detruire elle même. Elle ne peut pas changer la Nature de choses, et faire que l'avis de la Minorité soit l'avis de la Pluralité. On voit bien qu'un pareil statut au lieu d'etre un acte légal ou moral feroit un acte de Demence.

“ Si donc on pretend qu'il appartient à la Constitution Françoise, que deux cent mille Individus fassent sur un nombre de vingt millions de Citoyens les deux tiers de la volonté commune, que repondre si ce n'est qu'on soutient que deux et deux font cinq?

“ Les Volontés individuelles sont les seuls elemens de la Volonté commune. On ne peut ne priver le plus grand nombre du droit d'y concourir, ni arreter que dix volontés n'en vaudroient qu'une, contre dix autres qui en vaudroient trente. Ce sont là des contradictions dans les termes; des veritables Absurdités.

“ Si l'on abandonne un seul instant ce principe de première évidence, que la volonté commune est l'avis de la pluralité et non celui de la Minorité, il est inutile de parler raison. Au même titre on peut décider que la volonté d'un seul fera dire la pluralité, et il n'est plus besoin ni d'Etats Generau ni de volonté nationale, &c. car si la volonté d'un Noble peut en valoir dix, pourquoi celle d'un Ministre n'en vaudroit-il pas cent, un Million, vingt-six Millions? Avec de pareilles raisons on peut fort bien renvoyer chez eux tous les Députés nationaux et étouffer toutes les Reclamation des Peuples.”*

Again: if these Titles, Privileges, and Offices of Inheritance are of no Importance in society, how misplaced is the Arrogance and Hauteur which their Possessors assume from them; and how ridiculous the imaginary Consequence they annex to, and the public tribute of homage and servility they claim from them! If on the contrary, they are of that moment which the general demeanour of the privileged orders seems to indicate, how inconsistently absurd is it that an Infant or an Ideot may, in some, cases fulfil the Duties, and in all enjoy honours annexed to them?—that Knowledge and Integrity shall confer no additional claim, and that Negligence or Vice shall induce no Incapacitation? The Poet asks,

What

* Qu'est ce que le Tiers Etat—p. 126, Troisième Édition, 1789.

“ What can ennable fools, and knaves, and cowards?”

The answer is the Echo—Fools, and knaves, and cowards.

It is melancholy to reflect, that Observations such as these are fully warranted by the History of past times, and not contradicted by the general Complexion of present occurrences in any part of the Globe, where privileged orders are established among men. It is undeniable that these hereditary distinctions of Rank and Office, imply in their very nature and Constitution, a manifest tendency to debase, instead of ennobling the human Character; by taking away the motives and misapplying the rewards of virtuous exertion, and by affording temptation and impunity to vicious Indulgence.

Aware, perhaps, of their Inability to earn or preserve the testimony of public respect by the general Tenor of their actions, the privileged orders, in all ages and nations, have cunningly devised a means of blinding the eyes of the multitude, by the artificial glare of *Titles of Honour*, and distinctions of Dress.* Careless of intrinsic Merit, they have been Monopolists of every nominal Virtue which Fiction and Flattery have combined to create; and in every age, and every Country, they have sedulously appropriated to themselves, attributes of the most ridiculous extravagance, the most fulsome adulation, and (in fact) the keenest and most ironical Sarcasm. The Language of every nation has been tortured to furnish Appellations of the most hyperbolical panegyric, to gratify their unbounded vanity, and glut their insatiable avarice of unmerited praise. Even the hallowed epithets and ceremonies of religious Adoration, have been impiously pressed into the Service of indiscriminate Flattery, and the Kings and Nobles of the Earth have not scrupled to encroach upon the Majesty of Heaven! It is more than ridicule, it is contempt and Indignation, that History produces in the Mind of the astonished Reader, when she unfolds the genuine Characters of these most sacred, most christian, most noble, most puissant, high and mighty Sovereigns and Rulers of the Globe. It is this class of Mankind that furnishes the compleatest Specimens of mental Depravity, and which seems to have gloried in being the voluntary instruments of the Vengeance of Heaven for the Sins of

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Mankind.

* They have even adopted a System of appropriate Gluttony to distinguish themselves from the People; thus the Whale and the Sturgeon, with us, are royal fish.

Mankind. The Sum of Misery produced by the pride, the Revenge, the Ignorance, and the Ambition of Kings exceeds the utmost Stretch of human Calculation. The unfeeling *Systematic* devastation of the human race, which this class of Beings have unremittingly and unrelentingly pursued, is almost incredible, even to those who read with astonishment, the undeniable evidence of facts which compose the bulk of ancient and modern History. All the fancied Utility of Monarchs and Monarchy, from the beginning of time to the present hour, is unequal to the Mass of Evil occasioned by the Sovereigns of Europe collectively within this half Century, or even comparable in extent to the evident diminution of human happiness, at present meditated* by the combination of European Despots, royal and noble, against the Liberties of Poland and France.

— Vengeance in the lurid Air
 Lifts her red Arm expos'd and bare;
 On whom the rav'nois brood of Fate
 Who lap the blood of Sorrow, wait. (COLLINS.)

Such are the privileged orders; the titled race to whom nations bow the knee, and pay the servile homage of idolatrous prostration.

I have indeed endeavoured to shew the *absurdity and inconsistency* involved in this System of privileged corporations in a State, to which Titles of honour and offices of trust and profit are hereditarily, and in general almost exclusively confined: but it is hardly possible to treat them with mere ridicule, or abstractedly to discuss their inherent absurdity and contradiction, without giving vent to Sentiments of Contempt and Indignation, at the arrogant pretensions they set up, and the serious mischiefs they occasion: it is a melancholy Subject, and Sorrow stifles the nascent smile of ridicule on contemplating this productive source of human wretchedness. I proceed, however, in the unpleasant task of shewing the propriety of the other epithets I have applied to the adopted Theory of hereditary privileges of rank and function.

They are *useless*: a position that may now be advanced upon the best of all foundations; the most flourishing nation on the face of the Globe, America, having tried the experiment

* I shall notice, by and by, the truly diabolical advice of Mr. Burke on this subject.

experiment of doing without them on a very extensive scale, for near twenty years, and with success fully equal to the most sanguine expectation of her best wishers. Thus far, therefore, we tread on better than speculative ground—And America has at length confuted the advocates of Kings and Nobles by facts that admit of no controversy. He that runs may read, and those only are unable to see, who are previously determined to close their eyes to the light; content to shrink under practical confutation, while they wilfully reject Conviction.

I have always thought that it will be found on examination, (whether pursued with a view to mere Theory, or the evidence of past facts), that every Government has been, and will be conducted for the advantage in the first instance of the *Governors*, whoever they are: and the whole secret lies in making those the *actual* Governors, whether directly or indirectly, whose Interests and Welfare are intended to be the main object of the Government.

All Government may be reduced to that of the *few* governing the *many*, or the *many* governing *themselves*: and this last division will be, either directly, by the people meeting in person, (which in a large Community will be morally impossible) or indirectly, by elected Agents or Representatives removable by the People.

Hitherto (America excepted) the affairs of nations have been conducted by the Few governing the Many, with permanent Authority held in life-tenancy or inheritance; and the people have universally been subject (except in the Republics, as they are called) to Monarchs, or Nobles, or both. The Consequence has been, that in all such Governments, Kings and Nobles have flourished at the expence of the People, who have been universally regarded merely as the Footstools of their pride, and the means of their gratification. The hereditary orders have been the Leeches of the Community—the Warts and Tumours unnaturally growing upon, and deforming the fair frame of the body politic. To every general proposition there are exceptions; there are very few to this.

In the Republics (as they are falsely called) antient and modern, such as those of Greece and Róme, Holland, Venics, Geneva, &c. there has alwas existed a Nobility: the Government has always been in the hands of a permanent Aristocracy, in conjuiction with a certain portion only

of the People, more or less large, more or less subjected. The Consequence here has been, that the Aristocracy, seeking their own Interest on the one hand, and the People theirs on the other, there has been a perpetual tendency to intestine Commotion; to struggles and quarrels between the Governors and the Governed. Such Governments are bad for the few in proportion to the Share of power possessed by the many—and for the many in proportion to the power possessed by the hereditary few. The Commonwealth of *Rome* is a striking Illustration of these remarks. To instance, therefore, the inexpediency of republican government, by an appeal to the unsettled Situation of States which are *called* Republican, merely because they have had no King, however common it be, is the effect either of gross ignorance or inexcusable Artifice and Imposition. The more settled and less turbulent situation of Monarchical States with an hereditary Nobility, is merely the effect of a combination and monopoly of Power, which more completely suppresses the complaints of the People, breaks their spirits, and deters them from any attempt at pursuing their own Interests.

If the good of the People therefore is to be the Object of Government, they must be their own Governors—they must adopt, *in fact*, the government of the many by the many. In a State of extensive Territory, or numerous Inhabitants, they cannot be *personally* their own Governors; their numbers prevent their meeting when necessary, and acting effectually when met. This was tried upon a small Scale at *Athens*, but the effect was such as we might naturally look for.

The many, therefore, can only govern themselves by means of Agents or Representatives appointed for the purpose; and that these Agents or Representatives may be truly such, that they may not introduce gradually and effectually the other division of Government, yiz. that of the many by the permanent few, they must be either removable at pleasure, at short periods, or by rotative exclusion.

This System of Representative Government with exclusion by periodical Rotation of the public officers, (which if not necessary, seems at least expedient) has not been well understood till of late Years, and America is the only Country which affords tolerably fair examples from which the other nations of the Globe may judge of its effects. The Simplicity, the Tranquility, and the Cheapness of this System

System is unanswerably manifest in that quarter of the Globe, altho' it is not yet arrived at its Maturity even there, owing apparently to the hereditary prejudices of the people in favour of the British form of Government, when they adopted their present, most important Improvement. Even the French Constitution, tho' of late date is obviously imperfect, from the prevailing influence of temporary obstacles, and the perhaps, necessary Sacrifice to Prejudice and apparent Expediency among that otherwise enlightened People. While its present constituent parts are preserved, it will be, as it has been and still is, perpetually subject to the Influence of mutual Jealousy and distrust between the Court and the People; and a patriot Citizen, when elected Minister, is, and ever will be, a just object of suspicion the instant he gets within the vortex of the Civil List—*Hinc illæ Clades!*

When the People (as among the American Governments) by their Agents or Representatives fairly elected, choose their own Officers of State, returnable either periodically or at the will of the Constituents, into the great Masses of the Community, there can be but one predominant Interest, that of the PEOPLE; there can be ultimately but one set of Governors, the PEOPLE prescribing for themselves.

When on the contrary, (as among other nations the case is more or less), the legislative and executive powers of the State, and all the great Officers of Magistracy are committed to certain Families, the People instead of Servants, have Masters; instead of being their own Governors, they are governed; instead of mutual independence and equality, they are converted into property, and become Subjects; instead of the welfare of the Community being the predominant motive for every measure adopted by the State, a multitude of permanent Corporations are established with exclusive privileges, and having a separate Interest from the Interest of the people, and each possessing the means and inclination of pursuing its own Interest at the expence of the people.

For their own welfare, therefore, it should seem that privileged orders are necessary; for the welfare of the people, far otherwise. The American Republics have taught us experimentally, that nations *may* flourish and be happy who have, “ no Bishops, no Nobles, no Kings.”

These hereditary Functionaries are farther useles to the People, because it appears from fact, that the business involved

olved in the offices they inherit, is rarely transacted by them, but by their deputies. One set of Men usually fulfil the Duties, and another enjoys the honours and emoluments of hereditary functions. Let us examine for instance, how the case stands in our own Country.

It is a maxim with us, that the King can do no wrong—that he is not personally responsible for any act of State, but that his ministers alone are culpable and punishable for mal-administration. In discussing, therefore, any measure apparently proceeding from his Majesty, it is uniformly spoken of and treated as the act of his Ministers, and they alone are considered as the authors of it, unless it should happen to be popular, in which case his Majesty is complimented with being regarded as a joint Sharer in the honour with the Ministers his advisers. So that in truth and in fact, his Majesty's Duties as first Officer of State, are confined to the choice of his Ministers who do the business of the State; and these too are frequently forced upon him by the prevailing political party of the times. Mr. Burke, about the time when he first entered into the Service of Aristocracy, published a pamphlet entitled, "Thoughts on the Causes of the present Discontents": the evident and labour-ed tendency of which was, to incroach upon the preroga-tive of the Crown, and to prove that certain great heads of families of the opposition aristocracy had a right to expect that his Majesty should choose his Ministers perpetually and exclusively from among them. In fact this has been from that time to this time, the subject matter of perpetual strug-
gle between the Court and the opposition of this Kingdom, the people being made the occasional stalking-horse to conceal the interested designs of both parties.* For what party the shallow Talents and tinsel'd eloquence of Mr. Burke is em-
ployed, is of little importance excepting for the harm
he

* Le Gouvernement est en Angleterre le Sujet d'un combat continual entre le Ministère et l'Aristocratie de l'Opposition. La Nation et le Roi y paroissent presque comme simples spectateurs. La politique du Roi consiste à adopter toujours le parti le plus fort. La Nation redoute également l'un et l'autre parti. Il faut pour son salut que le combat dure, elle soutient donc le plus faible pour l'empêcher d'être tout à fait écrasé. Mais si le peuple au lieu de laisser le maniement de ses affaires servir de prix dans cette lutte de Gladiateurs, voulloit s'en occuper lui même par de véritables Repréfentans, croit-on de bonne foi que toute l'importance que l'en attache aujourd'hui à la Balance des pouvoirs ne tomberoit pas avec un ordre de Choses que seul la ræt
nécessaire? (Qu'est ce que le Tiers Etat. p. 99.)

he does to the cause of his friends; his political Character is settled by unanimous consent, *satis eloquentia, sapientia parum*: but Freedom still mourns over the political apostacy of one man, on whom the hopes of the people have long been too fondly placed; who, forgetting what is due to his past professions and future reputation, seems at length reluctantly but irrevocably entangled in the same inglorious cause.

It appears, therefore, that in Great Britain, a King has, in fact, nothing or next to nothing to do; all his nominal functions being actually fulfilled by others, who are responsible* for the fulfilment of them, as for their *own* act and deed.—Let us next enquire into the use of our hereditary Nobility.

They are by virtue of their birth, hereditary Legislators, and hereditary Judges: Makers and expounders of the Law.

I venture however without scruple to state it as a notorious fact, that the actual Legislators of the country, whether considered as to the proposing or discussing of Laws, are (with very slight exceptions) not the hereditary, but the elected Legislators—the Ministers for the time being, together with those noblemen who have acquired a seat in the upper house, not by hereditary descent, but by past Services. Let my reader run over in his mind, who are the active members of the House of Lords, and consider also how seldom any law is originally proposed there, and he will find that the truly *hereditary Nobility* constitute nine tenths of the mutes and dead votes.

In case of any Law question upon a Writ of Error, it is notorious that the Judges of the Courts below guide the decisions of the house: the hereditary Judges rarely pretend to an opinion upon the Subject. Indeed it is impossible for the professional Judges themselves, who have spent long lives in the study, to know with certainty in very many cases what the Law is, and they differ very frequently both on the bench and elsewhere—how absurd therefore is it to suppose that this requisite Knowledge is fairly to be expected from Men, who have no adequate inducement to make even the common attainments? Thus it ever must be when the rewards of merit, are given in advance. It is a trite observation in common life, that those are the worst paymasters who pay before hand.

In

* I mean legally and constitutionally responsible.—They take good care not to be actually so.

In the system of privileged orders, hereditary Legislators and hereditary Judges are made by disqualifying them, in the first instance, from ever becoming what they are required to be: it is not surprising therefore that they are not in fact, what they have no motive to become. I do in my conscience believe, that the English nobility are superior in merit and attainments, to the nobles of any other nation upon earth; and I have therefore used them in illustration of my position; but if their comparative utility in the state be so slight here, what are we to think of the necessity of this System elsewhere?

Farther, if the Privileged Orders of Society are not required to *earn* their envied distinctions, if they have no concomitant *Duties* to fulfil in consideration of the Privileges they enjoy, their Inutility is manifest, and the question is settled on this ground.—If on the contrary they have such Duties to perform, these Orders are still useless, for a Commoner (as one of the people is contemptuously termed in the proud language of Aristocracy) may be as equal to any Office whatever, as another man who is called a Duke or a Lord; and the Privileges thus granted in consideration of Services to be rendered, had evidently better be given when Merit is ascertained, than conceded in advance upon a bare possibility of their being deserved. In the one case also the People are confined in their choice to a comparatively small number of Persons, with little or no inducement to make the necessary attainments, while in the other case they have the Range of the whole Community, and the Satisfaction of knowing that it is their own fault if they choose ill, and the Consolation, that it is in their own Power to rectify the Mischoice.

It would appear, therefore, that these hereditary Distinctions are of no avail to any useful purpose in Society, even if the Experiment of relinquishing them had not been fairly tried—But it has been tried, and the fact and the theory are completely of accord.

Moreover these privileged orders, appear to me not merely useless, but, to the general welfare of Society—to the morals of Society—to the peace, tranquility, and safety of Society, detrimental, and even *dangerous*.

To the general welfare of Society they are detrimental, because they form an aggregate of Corporations distinct from the great Mass of the Community; with Interests separate

parate from, and frequently inconsistent with those of the Community. It is the interest of the *People* to obtain the benefits of civil Society to as great an extent, at as little expence, and with as few circumstances of artificial Inferiority between beings naturally of the same Class, as possible: it is the Interest of *Kings and Nobles* to acquire as much distinction of rank, as much artificial Superiority over their fellow Citizens, as many hereditary privileges for themselves and their Descendants, in short, as much power, as much honour, and as much emolument, with as little occasion for talents or exertion, with as little expence of time and trouble, as they can. And where is the Man who can honestly say, he would not be influenced by the same Motives in the same situation? Some kind of attention to the welfare of the people where it does not interfere with their own, they are of course compelled to pay, partly for the sake of appearance, and partly because the People are the necessary Instruments of their Riches and Grandeur. This, however, is obviously but a secondary Consideration. Unluckily for the great bulk of Mankind, these privileged orders, having the power for the most part in their own hands, have generally succeeded too well in the pursuit of their primary Object, while the *people*, having relinquished the power, not merely to persons, but to Families, have relinquished also the means of pursuing their own Interests, and of making the Welfare of the Community at large, the sole object (as it ought to be) of civil Government.

These orders are farther detrimental to the general Welfare of the Community, because it frequently ensues from this hereditary Monopoly of Offices of trust and importance, that they are filled by persons who are unequal to the Duties of them; and what is worse, by persons who are generally not removable for negligence or Incapacity: for they set up a *hereditary* claim to such Posts, and they also form a part of a body who, like all other Corporations, will have a fellow feeling for one of their own order, and will act under the common influence of an *esprit de Corps*.

Moreover, these orders injure society by the Discouragement they offer to useful occupations. Nobility, and Men of large fortune having the exclusive privilege of Idleness, and setting the fashion of the times, their servile herd of Imitators in all the inferior classes of society, are tempted like them to regard laborious Industry as degrading; incom-

patible with Gentility as well as Nobility. Hence the proud and insolent Contempt so common toward the laborious inhabitants of those Countries, where hereditary Monarchs and Nobles form, (as Mr. Burke somewhere calls them,) the ornamented Corinthian Capital of the political Column.

Again, these orders are detrimental to the general Welfare, because the baneful System of *Primogeniture* is entailed upon them as necessary to their existence: necessary to counteract the natural tendency of these orders to self-destruction from the effects of Luxury, Extravagance, and Dissipation. Hence a discouragement to population, from the expedient Celibacy of the younger Children.

Again; in every Community those who do not actually Labour, must be maintained by the superfluous produce of those who do: the privileged orders, therefore, who are for the most part the drones and butterflies of society, *fruges consumere nati*, encrease the burthensome class of unproductive Inhabitants, and are therefore an addition to the quantity of Labour necessary from the Industrious.

These privileged Classes promote inequality of *Fortune* as well as Rank in a State: they have a direct tendency, (of which the effect is always produced when not counteracted) to divide a nation into two grand parts, the Rich and the Poor—Such is the case in Russia, Spain, and Portugal, and was the case in France; and would be the case here, if a variety of causes peculiar to this Country, did not prevent the full effect of this evil tendency among the privileged orders. Even at present the over-grown Wealth of a rich Commoner, always carries him within the Vortex of Nobility, where he is at length engulphed.—The Depression, Servility, and Baseness of spirit on the one hand, and the haughty Demeanor and oppressive Conduct on the other, which this systematic inequality of Rank and Fortune never fails to produce, is too obvious and notorious to need more than the bare mention. It is in the one case a voluntary, and in the other, a compulsive degradation of the human Species.

But these orders are still farther detrimental to society, because they live and flourish upon national *Ignorance*. If the multitudes who compose the lower classes of the Community, were sufficiently instructed in the plainest principles of politics, and sufficiently aware of the most obvious means of pursuing their own Interests, they never would voluntarily

voluntarily adopt a System so repugnant in its Theory to both. It is therefore the interest of these orders that the bulk of society should be carefully taught to abstain from all political discussion or conversation—that their hours should be spent in labour without intermission, and that no leisure should be afforded for mental improvement—that they should be taught to reverence the titled orders as a class of superior beings, and to adopt with implicit Submission, the political Creed, of their self-created Rules. Thus are the mental faculties enchain'd, the childhood of society prolonged for ages, and the progressive Improvement of the species unnaturally retarded.—Mr. Burke seems perfectly aware of this absolute necessity of national Ignorance to the due maintenance of the privileged orders, as appears by the following curious note inserted in page 85 of Sir Brook Boothby's Observations on Mr. Burke's appeal. “ In a Letter to a certain French emigrant speaking of the affairs of the low Countries, our Author is reduced to a curious dilemma. He is obliged to give some sort of decision between a Monarch, an imperial Monarch and his Monks, on this point, *il suggere** (for it is in French that this Letter appears) *aux conseillers de l'Empereur de ne point detruire les préjugés dont un homme habile fait tier parti pour le gouvernement : de ne pas exciter les hommes à fouiller trop scrupuleusement dans les bâfes des anciens opinions DE PEUR que la plupart d'entre eux ne voient bientôt que les Monarques ne sont pas plus utiles à la Société que les Moines ; mais d'oublier un fois pour toutes l'immense Encyclopédie et Bibliothèque des Oeconomistes, et de revenir tout bonnement aux anciennes principes* (the principles of Monkery and absolute Monarchy). That it might be for the advantage of Princes and Priests to replunge the world into Ignorance and Barbarism, is perhaps true; but when the learned Gentleman advises

* I think it worth while for the sake of my English readers, to give the meaning of this Machiavelian Passage: it is as follows. “ He (Mr. Burke) suggests to the Advisers of the Emperor, not to destroy those prejudices which a skilful Statesman well knows how to turn to the advantage of Government: not to excite Men to search too scrupulously into the foundation of ancient opinions, for fear lest the greater part among them should quickly find out, that Monarchs are of no more use to Society than Monks; but rather to forget once for all, that immense Encyclopædia and Library of the Economists, and to return in good earnest to the old principles.”—The Economists are a class of Philosophers so called, who have laboured most successfully to enlighten Europe in general, and the French nation in particular, on the Theory of Politics and political Economy.

" Kings to forget what they have learned, he does not seem
 " to recollect, that they cannot at the same time command
 " their Subjects to unlearn what they have once known.
 " When Men have begun to think for themselves, when
 " they have carried their temerity of free thinking, perhaps
 " so far as to suspect that nations may exist without *Monks*
 " or *Tyrants*, it is already too late to burn libraries or Phi-
 " losophers. See *Lettre de M. Burke sur les affaires de*
 " *France et des Pays-bas addressée à M. le Vicomte de Rivarol.*
 " *Traduite de l'Anglois.*"

I cannot forbear another Quotation on the absolute ne-
 cessity of public *Ignorance*, to the success of Fraud and Im-
 position, altho' it relates to a class of privileged orders which
 I have not hitherto particularly noticed. It will furnish also a
 parallel to the famous passage in Mr. Burke's *Reflections*,
 where he so courteously mentions "the hoofs of the Swinish
 Multitude." (i. e. the *People*.)

Henry Knyghton, a *Canon* of Leicester, complains heavi-
 ly of Wickliff, (the Reformer) his neighbour and Contem-
 porary, " for having translated out of Latin into English,
 " the *Gospel* which Christ had entrusted with the *Clergy*
 " and *Doctors* of the *Church*, that *they* might minister it
 " to the *Laity* and weaker sort, according to the exigency
 " of times and their several occasions: so that by this means
 " the *Gospel* *Jewel* or *evangelical pearl* was made *Vulgar*,
 " was thrown about and trodden under foot of *Swine*.
 " (Lewis Hist. of Translations of the *Bible*, p. 20. 1729.
 " *Sylva*, p. 319."

Thus we find that public *Ignorance* is the Cement of the
 far famed Alliance between *Church* and *State*; and that *Im-
 posture*, political and religious, cannot maintain its ground,
 if *Knowledge* and *Discussion* once finds its way among the
Swinish Multitude. Hence we have a clue to the true source
 of *prosecutions* for *Libel*, and *public Proclamations* against
Constitutional Societies, and *sedition* *Correspondences*!
 But *Mystery* cannot last for ever; its day is far spent, and we
 have now the *touchstone*, the *Shibboleth*, by which the real
 friends of the *People* may always and certainly be known:
 those who mean well to the *people* say, " think for your-
 " selves, read for yourselves, decide for yourselves: try all
 " things, and hold fast that which is good: you are the most
 " concerned in what relates to your own *Interest*, and
 " wherever you place *implicit Confidence*, sooner or later

" you

“ you will infallibly be deceived.”—The other Side, on the contrary, take this for their text, and preach this for their doctrine, “ You (the people) have nothing to do with politics; leave that to your Rulers, they know best what is good for you; you have no need to think for yourselves, “ pay your Taxes quietly, and they will take care to think for you.”

Fellow citizens, thus are you cajoled:—Swine they call you, and Swine in understanding they would gladly make you: it is your Fault if they succeed.

To the *Morals* of a People these orders are dangerous, because they shew that honours and rewards are not appropriated as they ought to be, to Abilities and Virtue, and that they are not incompatible with Ignorance and Vice. They raise the fortuitous Circumstances of Wealth and Birth, above the possessions of Qualities the most useful to Mankind. Thus public Admiration is diverted from those objects to which alone it ought to be directed, and lavishly squandered on Persons by whom it has never been earned. Is it not surprising that such a form of Government should have its defenders among those who deem public Virtue worthy of attention? A form of Government, where Intrinsic merit is systematically degraded, and defrauded of its due share of public Approbation?

These orders are further dangerous to Morals, because they induce the Persons who compose them, to indulge in those vicious excesses to which wealth of itself too frequently furnishes the temptation and the means. Their hereditary claim to public homage and respect, is a set-off against the disgust which Vice would otherwise occasion, and they know by experience that a small portion of real Merit will entitle Nobility to a large share of public praise. Herein, as in other Commodities, the value encreases in proportion to the rarity.

But it is not merely that the motives to Vice are strengthened, and those to Virtue suppressed among the privileged orders themselves, but the farther misfortune is, that the eyes of the People are turned upon them as upon a superior race of Beings; and the inferior ranks of the Community, are every where too prone to follow the examples furnished by their *bettters*—a prostitution of Language which tells more than a volume, and is sufficient of itself to demonstrate the baneful effects on public morals, which this system

system invariably produces. It is thus that Luxury, Idleness, and Prodigality are sanctified; and exhibited to the public in all the Decorations which should be appropriated to Virtue alone. No wonder the multitude are dazzled, and blindly led to imitate the prominent qualities of their *superiors*.

Moreover these orders destroy that Spirit of Independance and self-esteem so essential to a firm and even tenor of virtuous Conduct, and so productive of good and of great Actions: and they create and promote those habits of meanness and Servility in every class, which contaminate the genuine Sources of Virtue, and suppress all the nobler feelings of the Soul. Even Learning and Abilities in every nation have been infected by this contagious spirit of public servility, and have basely contributed to fasten the chains of mental Degradation. Historians and Orators, Poets and Priests, have, in all ages and places, enlisted in this inglorious service, and swelled the long Catalogue of those, who (as EVELYN§ very properly expresses himself), “blaspheme for bread.” We need not, however, wander out of our own times or our own Country for illustration of these remarks; but for the honour of the human character I hope, the next generation, will read with a deep blush the despicable Adulation of *Englishmen* in their addresses on the King’s recovery. Well might the flattered Monarch have exclaimed with TIBERIUS, *O homines ad Servitutem paratos!*

To the *safety and tranquility* of a Nation these orders are dangerous: quarrelling almost incessantly with each other, or with the people, or with their neighbours, War, domestic and foreign, is (I may venture to say) exclusively attributable to the privileged orders.—War they create, and by War they were created.*

For

§ Discourse on Medals, p. 82.

“ As to the Nobility of modern Europe, what were they in their origin? The Chiefs of ferocious Warriors, who united barbarity of Conquest with barbarity of Manners; whose first rights were those of Usurpation and Plunder, and who founded their pre-eminence merely on the Command which they exercised in War. Thus was the Field of Battle the Nursery of this Nobility; a singular, a striking, and an alarming feature of resemblance with the order of Cincinnati.

“ Hence issued that Swarm of Counts, and Dukes, and Marquises, which overran and desolated Europe. All those Titles of human Vanity, were in their origin nothing more than military Titles, denoting different degrees of Command, but soon they became splendid Distinctions and privileges

For Facts of the martial Quarrels of these hereditary Monarchs and Nobles, we need not travel out of this Kingdom: let my reader take the trouble of casting his eye over the Table of Contents of any history of England, and he will, in ten minutes, be furnished with proofs innumerable of the present Assertion.

Indeed the annals of every nation upon earth, are scarcely any thing more, than accounts of War and Bloodshed occasioned by Kings, and Nobles, and Priests; where the people have been the miserable Victims of ambition and persecution, and have been led without remorse, like beasts to the slaughter. If, indeed, these hereditary Scourges of the human race, had been confined in their mutual quarrels to the mutual destruction of themselves only, Mankind would have been no losers; but the people have, on all occasions, been the wretched dupes of their ambitious leaders, and have verified in all ages the truth of the Poet's remark, *Quicquid delirant Reges, plectuntur Achivi.*

But in this, as in most other cases, the Transactions of our own Country will furnish abundant illustration of the remarks I have made: nor is it necessary for the present purpose to trace the sanguinary paths of Heroes* and Great Men of former times, or other nations, or refer my reader to the Multitude of Royal and Noble Plunderers, whose Devastations crowd the page of ancient and modern history, and compose the melancholy Chronicle of human Misery. It will suffice, as I have just observed, to cast an eye over the table of contents of any history of England; and scarce a chapter will be found unoccupied by accounts of intestine ravages or foreign hostilities, to which the ambitious Designs of Kings and Nobles have uniformly given rise.

The Quarrels and Disputes, (and in most cases the bloody and desolating wars) between William the Norman and Harold; between Henry the 1st. and his Brother Robert; between

" leges in civil life. Soon they laid the foundation of that barbarous feudal System, which for ages debased all human kind, converted whole nations into herds of Slaves, and a few individuals into broods of Tyrants." Mirabeau's Considerations on the Order of Cincinnatus. p. xi.) I ought not to have forgotten this book among those I have mentioned in a former Note.

* Heroes are much the same—the points agreed,
From Macedonia's Madman, to the Swede.
The one strange purpose of their Lives, to find,
Or make, an enemy of all Mankind. (POPE.)

between Stephen and Matilda; between Henry the II^d, and his Children: between Richard the Ist. and Prince John; between King John and the French Prince Lewis; between the young King Henry III^d. and Lewis; between Richard the II^d. and the Duke of Lancaster: between the Houses of York and Lancaster in the Reigns of Henry VIth. and Edward IVth; between Edward the Vth. and the Duke of Gloucester; between Richard III^d. and the Earl of Richmond; between Henry the VIIth. and Lambert Simnel; between the same Monarch and Perkin Warbeck; between Mary and Lady Jane Grey; between James II^d. and Monmouth; between William II^d. George Ist. and II^d. and the Family of James II^d, all arose from disputed Claims to the Monarchy of England, and are all referable to the quarrels of our princes among themselves. Such, with us, have been the *peaceable* effects of hereditary Succession, so vaunted by its pensioned Advocates! But the Catalogue is not yet finished; for these are the Disputes of Royal Contenders among themselves, respecting the Crown of England alone. During the Reigns of William Ist. William Rufus, Stephen, Henry II^d. Richard Ist. John, Henry III^d. Edward II^d. and III^d. Richard II^d. Henry IVth. Vth. and VIth. the blood and treasure of the people were wasted, and the nation engaged in almost perpetual Warfare with France, on account of the Attempts and Pretensions of our Kings either to the Dukedom of Normandy, or the French Monarchy: and to this very day his Most Sacred Majesty King George the Third, claims, by the Grace of God, to be King of Great Britain, France and Ireland; Defender of the Faith, and so forth! Where, but among Monarchs, can this mockery of common sense be paralleled?

Turning again over the Pages of our British History, I find that during the short intervals when our royal Claimants rested from their sanguinary Labours, and suspended for a while their mutual Sacrifice of a deluded people, the Barons, (those Minor-Despots, who formed the Aristocracy of the Kingdom,) were seldom idle. They missed few favourable opportunities of leading out their Vassals against the Monarchs; reviving, as occasion served, the dormant, but never-dying struggle for power between them, or revenging some successful Monopoly on the part of the Sovereign of the precious privilege of Extortion and Oppression. But it will be tedious, and I hope unnecessary, to enumerate the re-

the

peated Facts of this nature, with which our history abounds: the reader will recollect them for himself. Humanity, indeed, would wish to forget these oft-recurring Scenes of Slaughter and Desolation, which cast a gloom over the goodness of Providence, and almost tempt us to ask, for what Sins of Mankind has the Earth been so frequently delivered up to these Vicegerents of Pandæmonium? From time immemorial the transactions of the privileged orders (never forgetting the Priesthood) have been, for the most part, like the Code of *Draco*, penned in blood.

Hence, also, I omit the various struggles of the *People* against the oppression of the privileged orders. We all know the Tylers and Hampdens of their day: we have all read the voluminous details of the evils which were occasioned by that perfidious Despot Charles the First—the blessed Martyr whose character still forms the annual Theme of pious panegyric among the reverend professors of courtly adulation. To all of us these facts are known: they have pleasingly arrested our attention during youth, but they are mournful and melancholy Lessons for our more reflecting and maturer years. Neither does it seem necessary to enter into a detail of the rise and progress of the numerous foreign wars in which the nation has been successively plunged from the time of William the Norman to the *Æra* of the Revolution. It is well known to the most superficial reader of English History, that almost all of them have been exclusively owing to the Monarchs on the Throne, and their advisers; and that none of them are exclusively attributable to the *People*; not even in the two or three solitary cases where they had the apparent sanction of popular concurrence. In every instance, there is full reason to believe, that had royal Instigation been wanting, the wars would have been wanting also.

From the Revolution to the accession of his present Majesty, the foreign wars in which the nation has been involved, have been frequent, bloody and expensive. The motives that gave rise to them are so truly and so briefly expressed by Guthrie*, in a very popular compilation, that altho' the passage relates to another subject, and was penned for a different purpose, and by a monarchial writer, I shall exhibit it without scruple in illustration of my present Argument.

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* GUTHRIE's Geographical Grammar, 8vo. 1785. p. 295.

“ In order to take a clear and comprehensive View of the national debt, it must first be premised, that after the Revolution, when our new Connections with Europe introduced a new System of foreign Politics, the Expences of the nation, not only in settling the new Establishment, but in maintaining long wars as principals on the Continent, for the security of the Dutch Barrier; reducing the French Monarchy; settling the Spanish Succession; supporting the House of Austria; maintaining the Liberties of the Germanic Body, and other purposes, increased to an unusual Degree; insomuch that it was not thought adviseable to raise all the expences of any one year by Taxes to be levied within that year, lest the unaccustomed weight of them should create murmurs amongst the people.”— That is in short, our forefathers having spent as much of their own property as they chose to spare in these Quixotic Expeditions, took the Liberty of spending the property of their posterity. It is impossible, however, to doubt upon the preceding faithful enumeration of the objects of the various Wars since the Revolution, *to whom* we are obliged for them. They are objects which would very naturally enter into the Brain of a Dutch Stadtholder or German Elector; but the People of England, left to themselves, would never have looked far enough to think of them, or had Folly enough to adopt them.

Coming now to the Reign of his present Majesty, I must conform my Language to the constitutional law of the land, and speak of the wars of this period, not as owing to the Monarch, but the Minister. Historians of past times, not having the fear of ex-officio Informations for Libel before their eyes, may tell truth with impunity, and take Liberties on behalf of the public, which those who animadvert on the Transactions of the present, must, for their own Sakes, cautiously abstain from. In the present case, indeed, there is no need of them. Thus much we may assert, that as Kings who chuse Ministers, cannot but entertain some private Opinion or other respecting those Measures which obviously concern their own Power or Interest, it must necessarily be a strong recommendation in the choice and continuance of Ministers, that their sentiments are similar to those of the Sov'reign; or, that whatever their own sentiments may be, they are willing to run the risk of public Responsibility, by supporting those measures which the Monarch individually may approve. If his

Majesty

Majesty has the right (as he has) of choosing his Ministers; he must be guided in his choice by some motive or other; and no more obvious motive can be assigned than a similarity of Sentiment *. In the Debates on the American War, Lord George Germain at one time publicly declared, and Lord North at another time pretty strongly insinuated, that altho' they were his Majesty's Ministers, they did not pursue their own measures but the Monarch's. Language extremely unconstitutional, however true it might have been in fact. Had Mr. Burke impeached these Men instead of Mr. Hastings, (and he has abused Lord North as virulently as Mr. Hastings) he would have preserved a little more appearance of Consistency. But Mr. Burke is now the right honourable friend and coadjutor of the right honourable Lord in the blue Ribbon, with whom, at one time, he and Mr. Fox would not dare to trust themselves in a room! A truly right honourable Coalition; and beautifully illustrative of the systematic Inconsistency which forms so distinguishing a trait in Mr. Burke's Character!

The American War then, that foul blot upon the character of the nation, and which will mark the reign of George the third, as the most disgraceful period of the British Annals, was the war of the Ministers. A War, notoriously commenced for the mere purposes of patronage and Revenue, in direct opposition, not only to the Spirit of the Constitution, but to the plainest principles of civil Liberty and political Expediency, and virulently persisted in, with Circumstances of deliberate Inhumanity till then unknown ||! In the comparatively short but mournful space of seven years, more than one hundred and twenty millions § of money were squandered, and at least one hundred and twenty thousand Lives ** destroyed, to gratify the diabolical passions of Avarice, Ambition, and Revenge! Nor was this all, for there is farther to be added, the mutual loss which the English and Americans sustained in their Trade and their Shipping, and the still more grievous Calamity which both nations experienced by the long suspension of Agriculture,

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Commerce

forty

* Et sapis, et mecum sentis, et Jove judicas aequo. HOR.

|| I allude chiefly to the employment of the Indians, and the merciful manifesto which threatened the Americans with the extremes of war.

§ I do not include the pecuniary loss of the Americans.

** The Americans compute their loss at 70000. GERDON'S Hist. v. 4. p. 404.

Commerce and Population. Thus has it been in the Power of a few men, chosen by the Crown, and many of whom still live in the luxurious enjoyment of the Wages of Iniquity, to throw back the natural course of progressive Improvement in Great Britain and America, for at least half a Century! If it be said that these facts do not relate to my argument, the American War not being the War of the King but of his Ministers, I am ready to allow, that so far from speaking of the King individually, it is not for me to determine whether any, or what part of the American War, is directly or indirectly attributable to the existence of a *monarchical form of Government* in this Country. However, as the enumeration of the Wars of Great Britain would have been very incomplete without some notice of an event of such magnitude, I could not properly omit noticing it. The reader must draw his own Conclusions from the facts.

I do not think it worth while to dwell on the petty Mischiefs of Mr. Pitt's Administration in the Article of foreign Wars. The Commerce of the Country, has indeed, been three times wantonly impeded; Fleets have been manned without remorse by the violent measure of impressing sailors, and they have been unmanned again without consideration, and manned again almost immediately to be discharged in port without having answered one purpose of public Utility; some additional Millions also have increased the Burthen of public Debt; and the national Character has been disgraced in the Eyes of Europe, by unexecuted threats and unrelented insults. Such are the Laurels which our heaven-born Minister has won! But these are comparatively trifling evils. Youth and Ignorance and Self-Conceit having been placed at the helm of the Government, we may thank our good fortune that matters are no worse. We have mistaken Cunning for Wisdom, and Insolence for Ability, and Declamation for Knowledge—we have presumed want of Vice from want of Age, and political honesty from public profession, and we have been the Dupes of our own Credulity. Mr. Pitt has outwitted the Nation; and I shall be much mistaken, if he does not, in the end, outwit himself.

That wars are chiefly owing to the privileged orders, would be a fair Conclusion from this Circumstance alone, if there were no other to corroborate it, that to them Europe is indebted for STANDING ARMIES; the favourite system, and at length the perpetual concomitants of monarchical Govern-

ment

ment and hereditary Nobility. Kings, thus having the Instruments of Ambition always at hand, are subject to the perpetual temptation of using them; and Europe knows, by melancholy Experience, that a fine army in good Discipline has too frequently been the Cause of war*, that otherwise might never have existed.—With a Body of Men always ready, whose trade is fighting, and of which the most active spirits burn for an opportunity of signalizing themselves in their honourable vocation, it is no wonder that the temptation altogether is sometimes irresistible. If the fact be denied, that standing armies are kept up for the sake of being ready to make war when a tempting opportunity presents itself, and if it be asserted on the contrary, that they are wholly maintained for the purpose of self-defence, my charge is made good in its fullest extent; for this proves, that the temptation to invade their neighbours, is so habitually powerful among Monarchs, that each is compelled at an enormous expence to have an army in perpetual readiness, for the sake of security against the ambition of the rest.

Nobility moreover, being disgraced in its own estimation, by the common and peaceable pursuits of honest Industy, and the Church and the Bench, requiring, at least, an appearance of Study, a presumption of Knowledge, and an outward decency of Deportment; with which it can hardly be expected that young Men of high birth should willingly comply; there scarcely remains any other resource, against the lafitude of Idleness, to the Favourites of PRIMOGENTI-TURE, or against the unseemly alliance of Pride and Poverty to her Victims, than the *Army*. No wonder, therefore, that the military establishment of every European State should be so large, when it serves such useful purposes to the privileged orders, in whose hands are the Governments of Europe; and when it forms so strong a link of mutual Connection between Sov'reigns and their Nobility. In this Country where politics were much better understood than in any other nation upon earth, before the American and French Revolutions, the People have always entertained a well-founded dread of Standing Armies; which, from the time of Charles the 1st. to Geo. IIId. have been the subject of frequent Struggles between the Court and the People. But the

* It may well be suspected that we should never have found it worth while in England, to annihilate the power of Tippoo Saib in India, if our Army there and our Military Governors had not found it out for us.

privileged orders have at length obtained a complete Victory, and the Army Establishment of Great Britain, by the persevering endeavours of our Kings and Ministers, is now voted as a matter of course; notwithstanding the people are cajoled with the parliamentary farce of its being continued only from Year to Year.

That standing Armies are dangerous to the Safety of every Country where they are maintained, is indubitable from all the past facts relating to them in ancient and modern History. Pisistratus at Athens, Tyndaridas at Syracuse, Matho and Spendius at Carthage, thus embroiled or enslaved their Country. At Rome, the Army was the alternate instrument of Ambition to Marius and Sylla, and to Cæsar and Pompey. Augustus took Care to be appointed Governor of all the Provinces *where Armies were maintained for fear of Insurrections*. Throughout the remaining history of the Roman State, both in the east and the west, we find the empire incessantly deluged in blood, by means of the Army and Praetorian Guards, who set up and dethroned whom they pleased *. Let the reader return to modern history, and peruse the Wars of the Florentines with the German disbanded Army; the Depredations of the Spaniards in the Low Countries; the means by which Gustavus formerly, and the late King of Sweden, in 1772, enslaved that Country; by which Prince Maurice attempted the same in Holland; by which the French have been held in civil Bondage, from the times of Charles VII. and Louis XI. to the present day; to say nothing of the Praetorian Guards—the Janizaries of the Turkish Empire, and he will have no doubts on the subject: if he should have any, let him peruse the History of England to remove them, where he will see a regular systematic design on the part of our Monarchs and their Ministers, to maintain an unnecessary standing Army in time of peace, as a means of supporting their power, providing for their Dependents, and crushing the People. The following short view of the history of standing Armies in our own Country, which, with the assistance of Tenchard, I have compiled from the histories of the times, will not be uninteresting or irrelevant to the present purpose.

Richard the Second seems to have been the first who kept on foot a permanent Military; he raised 4000 Archers in Cheshire,

* Of 26 Emperors 16 were murdered or deposed.

Cheshire, and with these he surrounded and overawed the Parliament ; he let them loose to live as Free-booters on the people, and connived at every excess of Rape, Robbery and Murder which they committed. In return for these Services he made Cheshire a Principality: but being compelled to go to Ireland, the People took advantage of his absence, and he was dethroned.—The next appearance of a standing Army, was in Henry the VIIth's time, who, much to the discontent of the Nation, raised and continued the Yeomen of the Guard.—In England, no farther attempt of this kind was made till the Reign of Charles the 1st, who seems to have set an example of every Species of Despotism. In Ireland, indeed, there was a small Army constantly maintained, even in times of peace. In Edward the IVth's time, this was 200 Men ; in 1535 it was 300 ; in 1543, 380 horse and 160 foot.—Under Mary 1000 ; they were increased under Elizabeth to 1500 and 2000, which number they continued till the 15th of Charles 1st.

In 1627 this king dispersed all over England the Army returned from Cadiz, quartering them even upon private houses, as it suited his Interest or Revenge, especially upon those who refused payment of the arbitrary loan imposed to maintain the Army. But the Clamours of the people, and the war in which he soon after engaged, prevented this evil from becoming Stationary. In 1628 he sent for 1000 (Trenchard says 3000) German horse to be quartered upon England, and to support his arbitrary measures ; “ and it must be confessed,” says Hume *, “ that the King was so far right, that he had now, at last, fallen on the only effectual method of supporting his Prerogative ; but at the same time, he should have been sensible, that till provided with a sufficient *military force*, all his attempts in opposition to the rising Spirit of the Nation, must in the end, prove wholly fruitless.” In this year the Commons addressed upon the grievance occasioned, to the Country, by the billeting of Soldiers, and the enormities of which they were guilty : to remedy this, Charles introduced of his own authority, martial Law among them. Hence the petition of Right presented the same year, complained not only of the grievance abovementioned, but also of this illegal stretch of Power in the King.

The

The first regular project, according to Trenchard*, for a standing Army, was in the Year 1629, which “ required only 3000 foot in constant pay to bridle the Impertinence of Parliaments; to overaw the Parliament and the Nation; “ to make edicts to be laws; to force upon the people vast numbers of Excises; and in shourt, to overturn the whole frame of this noble English Government. Whoever has “ a mind to peruse that dangerous Scheme in Rushworth’s “ Appendix, p. 12, and what he says of it in his history, “ will see enough.”

In Ireland, Lord Stafford considerable augmented the standing Army, and had not the Scots been too quick for Charles, 9000 Irish were to have been sent from thence to England: and one of the charges against Stafford was his advice to Charles to reduce England, by means of the standing Army of Ireland: for the judicious patriots of that time did not chuse to trust the King with a permanent standing Military in England. This very able Minister of a despotic Sov’reign, saw the use of a standing Army, and exprefsed his wish for an establishment of it in England, as appears by his Letters, v. 2. p. 60. In 1641 the parliament declared against the King’s affumed power of impressing men at will for any Service, in confequence of his Laws iſued out Commissions to raiſe 2000 foot and 200 horse in Cheshire, for his Guard. Charles on this, offered to raiſe 10000 Volunteers to ſerve in Ireland. The Parliament, however, ſaw thro’ the Scheme, and refufed it. In 1642, on the ſubject of the King’s Complaint againſt the five Members, he came with about 300 armed Guards, and furrounded the Houſe of Commons; but this impolitic conduſt anſwered no other purpoſe than to irritate the people againſt him; and the Civil War, which commenced this year, made Armies neceſſary on both fides. Notwithſtanding all the iſtances of arbitrary power on the part of this Monarch, he always poſſeſſed (as Hume remarks) a great Majority in the Houſe of Peers, even after the Bifhops were driven away.

The King being made prisoner, the Army ſoon found its own power and importance, and began to dictate to the Parliament, who had entertained (like good patriots) a deſign of diſbanding a great part of the Troops. These, however, obtained poſſeſſion of the King’s Perſon, marched againſt the

* Arguments against Standing Armies, Part II.

the Parliament, new modelled it at their pleasure, and established a Legislature of their own choice. These violent proceedings were repeated the next year, and at length in 1653 *Cromwell*, who had the army at his beck, by means of it, dissolved the Parliament, and seized the Government. Pursuing the common system of despotic Rulers, he divided the Kingdom into regular military Jurisdictions. On the accession of his son Richard, another parliament was called; which was also dissolved by the Army, who were not satisfied till they had deposed the new Protector. The long Parliament was then restored; this also was soon expelled from its functions, by the Military, who at length siding with *Monk*, brought in King Charles the IId.

This sensible Monarch knew the utility of a standing Army to arbitrary power, and therefore was extremely desirous of keeping on foot the troops that had set him on the Throne. *Clarendon*, however, without denying his general Reasons, persuaded the King, that an army so accustomed to interfere in the Government of the Country, would not suit his purpose. The King consented, and the Army was disbanded, except 4000 foot and 1000 horse, the first regular standing Army in this Country. Charles meant to have kept up the Forts in Scotland which *Cromwell* had erected upon the common principle of curbing the People; but Lord Lauderdale (An. 1660) represented to him, that it was the Loyalty of the Scotch that induced *Cromwell* to erect these forts, and that the time would “probably come, “when the King, instead of English Garrisons in Scotland, “would be glad to have Scotch Garrisons in England; who, “supported by English pay, would be fond to curb the “feditious genius of that opulent Nation: and that a people, “such as the Scots, governed by a few Nobility, would “more easily be reduced to submissiōn under Monarchy, “than one like the English, who breathed nothing but the “Spirit of democratical Equality.” (Humé, v. 6. p. 365.) This courtier-like advice was accordingly adopted; and in return Lauderdale and Middleton some time after, contrived that the Scotch should pass an act, engaging to raise 20,000 foot and as many horse to enter at his Majesty’s call, into any part of his dominions.

In consequence of the King’s spending upon his Debts and his Pleasures the Money granted by Parliament to carry on the Dutch war, *De Ruyter* was enabled to sail into the Thames, to burn some ships at Chatham, and to menace

Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Harwich. The King took advantage of this consternation, not to equip a fleet, but to raise an Army of 12000 men. Parliament was summoned in hopes that the present distress would induce them to countenance this measure;—they met;—and the only vote the Commons passed, was an address to disband the Army. The Court though fit to comply and prorogued the Parliament till winter. Peace was soon after signed at Breda, in July 1667. Charles, however, was well convinced that with his views he could govern more easily by an Army than by a Parliament, notwithstanding the loyal Spirit of the Nation; accordingly, as a pretext was necessary, in 1670 means were found in conjunction with France, again to quarrel with the Dutch. The King dreading the remonstrances of a Parliament, made long and frequent Prorogations, and as Hume remarks, “Every step he took in this affair became “a proof to Men of Penetration, that the War was intended “against the Religion and Liberties of his Subjects, even “more than against the Dutch themselves.” The King by this time had gradually increased his Guards to about 5000 Men; and this war served as a pretext to raise an Army of about 12000, under *General Schomberg*, with the money granted by the Commons to disband the former Army, and for the general purposes of Government. This Army, under *Schomberg*, instead of being sent to act with the Allies, the French, (with whom in 1670 he had concluded an alliance, and was to receive 200,000£. a year, and 6000 Men in case of Resistance at home) he encamped on Blackheath, and relying on the assistance of the French King, he ventured to assume a haughty tone toward the Parliament. But when the moment of Rupture arrived, his courage failed him, and his Peers advised him to comply with the wishes of the Commons. Shaftesbury, who had promoted the arbitrary views of the Monarch, now left him, and laid open his designs to the leaders of the Commons. Among other requests, they again addressed him to disband his Army as soon as the War should be over; Charles gave them an evasive answer, not meaning to comply; but at length, his poverty and not his will consented, and the troops disbanded themselves for want of pay. Soon after (Feb. 1674) peace was concluded with the Dutch, but contrary to treaty, Charles still kept up 10,000 Men in the French Service, to be ready against his Subjects at home. Parliament
 hardly

hardly ever met but they complained of the conduct and proposed addresses for the recall and disbanding of these troops, which, for a long time, was evaded by repeated prorogations. At length the King did issue a Proclamation for the purpose, which by his dealings underhand he counteracted as much as possible. About this time, the King having made peace, on the part of England, offered his mediation between the French and the Allies, and consulted Sir William Temple, whose advice upon the occasion is remarkable. "He told his Majesty," says Hume, v. 8. p. 7. "very plainly that he would find it extremely difficult, "if not absolutely impossible, to introduce into England "the same System of Government and Religion as was "established in France; that the universal bent of the na- "tion was against both.—That in France every circum- "stance had long been adjusted to that System of Govern- "ment, and tended to its establishment and support: that the "Commonality being poor and dispirited were of no account; the "Nobility, engaged by the prospect or possession of numerous offices "civil and military, were entirely attached to the Court, and "the Ecclesiastics retained by like motives, added the sanction of "Religion to the principles of civil Policy." Such were the observations of this experienced Statesman, and well worthy they are of the Reader's most serious Reflection *. In Jan- 1678, after some adjournments, the Parliament met, and the Commons agreed to support a War against France: they voted among the rest an army of 30000 men; but great difficulties were made about this army, which the house sus- pected would be employed more against England than France. nor did they suspect without reason; for altho' between 20 and 30000 men were raised in a few weeks, not above 3000 were sent out to Flanders, under the Duke of Monmouth, and a few of the yet undisbanded regiments were recalled for that purpose from France. Parliament meeting again in Summer, the Commons, justly irritated at this treacherous con- duct, passed a vote that all troops raised subsequent to the 29th of September, 1677, should be disbanded: the King made use

* In 1675 a Motion was made and carried in the House of Lords, enjoining a test to be taken by Members of Parliament, &c. in favour of absolute passive obedience and non-resistance towards the King, and all that were put in Authority under him.—In the beginning of 1677 the Commons were first regularly divided into the Court and Country parties; Lord Clifford having begun the regular system of Bribery and Corruption to increase the power of the Court,

of the Lords to wheedle the Commons into a compliance, with the continuation of the Army, then about 24,000 men, but without effect. The Parliament met again in November, when the Commons finding 57 Commissions granted to Papists to raise men, counterfeigned J. Williamson, they sent him to the Tower for this, and for saying that the King had a right to keep Guards if he could pay them. They then voted a sum to defray the expence of disbanding the army: and as the King had applied a former sum granted for the same purpose, to the *continuing* of an army, they directed this to be paid into the Chamber of London instead of the Exchequer. The Lords finding their Monarch's intentions thus defeated, took umbrage and quarrelled with the Commons. The Commons, however, stuck to their own measures, and complained of the forces still in France; and voted "that the continuance of any standing forces in this nation, other than the Militia, was illegal, and a great grievance and vexation to the people." The King after this sent no more recruits to France, but suffered the regiments there to wear out by degrees. Indeed he was offended with the French, for according to Sir W. Temple, when in 1678, he wished to enter into a private treaty with France, the French King tied him to 8000 troops in England and no more: upon this Charles exclaimed, "Are all his promises to make me absolute Master of my people come to this? Or does he think that a thing to be done with 8000 men?"—In the latter end of 1678, the long (or pensioned) Parliament was dissolved. In 1679 another Parliament was called, of which, the Commons voted the standing Army and the King's Guards illegal. "A new pretension," says Hume, "but necessary for the full security of Liberty and a limited Constitution." (v. 8. p. 106.) Hume (who being a monarchical writer, I quote as often as I can) somewhere else calls "the Army a mortal distemper in the British Government, of which it must at last inevitably perish."

After this three other Parliaments were successively dissolved, not suiting * the King's designs: and for the last three years of his reign, he managed without one. Not being able to obtain money from the Commons to support

the

* The Lords, however, were, as usual, the friends of the Monarchy: thus the Exclusion bill, which in the Commons was carried by a large majority, was rejected in the Lords by a majority of two thirds, (63 to 32). All the protestant Bishops, except three, voted against it.

the Garrison and Fortress at Tangiers, this was demolished, and the Garrison being brought over to England increased the Army in 1683-4 to 8482 privates, besides officers. In Ireland the Establishment was increased to 7700.

Soon after the accession of James, the Duke of Monmouth laid claim to the Crown, but 6 or 7000 undisciplined men with him, were defeated by 3000 regular troops: James never losing sight of the common object of his predecessors, took occasion upon this to raise the army to 15,000 Men, and told the parliament, which was summoned in 1685, § that the Militia was altogether useless. The Commons, suppliant as they were, thought that as the Kingdom had been defended hitherto without the assistance of a standing Army, it might be so still: and if the Militia was useless they would make it useful, and accordingly they ordered in a bill for that purpose. However James prorogued them and called no other Parliament during his reign. Toward the latter end of it, his standing Army was increased to 20,000 in England, and to 8,700 in Ireland.

When the Convention Parliament met under King William, they declared that "the keeping up a standing Army in Time of peace without authority of Parliament, was contrary to Law." Throughout the whole of King Williams reign however, there was a perpetual struggle between him and the Commons on this subject; and when in 1698 they at length compelled him to disband his troops, he complained grievously of ill usage, and even threatened to quit his Throne. When he gave his Consent to the Bill for this purpose, (which was carried in the Commons by 185 against 148, of whom 116 were placemen) the King could not help expressing his anger on the occasion. In apparent compliance with this measure, *the men were disbanded, but the Officers were retained.* This flagrant cheat however, on the part of the Monarch, would not satisfy the people, and therefore a few Regiments were actually and compleatly disbanded and the rest sent to Ireland, to be ready when occasion offered. But this scheme also was seen through; and the Commons required a List of the disbanded Troops, which William promised *as soon as he conveniently could*, and the Parliament broke up a month after.

§ This Year and this Parliament was remarkable for an opposition to Court Measures, beginning in the House of Peers, and being moved by a Bishop! (Bp. of London).

after. The King then sent for other foreign regiments, and kept them in Ireland. Indeed this *glorious Deliverer*, as it has been the fashion to call him, was not much better than a Tyrant and a Traitor. See his Letter to Lord Galway about the Army, dated Kingston, Jan. 27, 1698 (Ralph's Continuation of Guthrie, p. 2. p. 808.)

This Monarch, as Ralph very properly observes (p. 2. p. 760.) "In his Declaration when bidding for the affection and Confidence of the People, as Prince of Orange had set forth, that his great purpose was to settle their Liberties on such a foundation that no danger should remain of their relapsing into Slavery: and that as soon as this was done he would send back all his foreign Forces. And yet he was now (1697) contending not only for a *Standing Army*, which was incompatible with the Security of these Liberties, but for such an Intermixture of *Foreigners* among them as aggravated out of Measure, the Jealousy which from such a Variety of Causes had taken possession of the Public. For of these *Foreigners* he had one troop of Horse consisting of 220 Men, and one Regiment of Body Guards, consisting of four Batalions or 2670 Men. These were *Dutch*. He had also one *Scotch* regiment of 1656 Men: two regiments of Dragoons, consisting of about 1400 Men, and three of foot, consisting of almost 3000, all *French* refugees, who had no other Dependence but upon him, and with a very little Court-management might in process of time have been brought to serve for such *Praetorian* bands as served the worst purposes of the worst Roman Tyrants; or the *Turkish Janizaries*, who have no Property but their swords, nor relation to or connection with any one of the human Species but the officers who discipline, and the Lord Paramount, who pays and commands them." In the Letter above referred to (to Lord Galway) William proposed to send secretly 18 Batalions of Foot, 3 Regiments of Horse, and 5 of Dragoons to Ireland.

In the very next Session the King made another attempt to keep up his Dutch Guards, and the Court party did their utmost to carry this point in the House of Commons, but without avail, for the House addressed the Sovereign on the Subject, reminding him of his repeated promises, and requesting their dismission, to which the King reluctantly consented.

Thus

Thus ended the many Struggles between William and the House of Commons on the Subject of a Standing Army, the latter indirectly consenting (1698-9) to a compromise for 6000 foot and 4000 horse and Dragoons, which the 35,000⁰⁰⁰ then voted for the army was computed to maintain, instead of 17656 Infantry, and 6876 Horse, of which the English military then consisted. The King however added 3000 Marines under pretence of their not being a Military Corps.

During the reign of Queen Anne, till the Peace of Utrecht, the Nation was engaged in perpetual Wars upon the continent for the purpose already mentioned; the standing army at home during that time was between 9 and 10,000; after the peace 1713, it was augmented (including invalids) to about 12,000.

In the Reign of Geo. Ist. during the rebellion in 1716, the military Establishment was increased to 32,000, against which the Minority-Lords entered a Protest. On the quelling of this Rebellion, the famous (or rather infamous) Septennial bill was brought in, and passed. In 1717 the Army was 16,347 (probably besides Invalids for Walpole this Year inveighs against the danger of a Standing Army of 18,000 Men. In 1718 he was a violent opponent of the Jurisdiction of Courts Martial. In 1721 and 1722, there were again protests on the Mutiny bill, the army in the latter Year being 16,449 effective Men, and 1815 Invalids. In the next year there was another protest, 4000 having been added to the Army and retained. In 1724 the Army debate occasioned another protest, and others in 1729, 1730 and the beginning of 1731. At the close of 1731 another protest was entered against the standing Army, and it was moved that the Committee should be directed to propose 12,000 instead of the number intended by Ministry; but this of course was negatived. The year 1732 produced another protest on the same Subject. In 1733 the Duke of Marlborough brought a bill into the Lords to make commissioned Officers independant of the Court, which like all other motions, was quashed by the Ministry. On this occasion also the Minority Lords entered a protest. In 1735 the Army was augmented to 25,744, which occasioned likewise a protest. In 1738 the Duke of Newcastle had increased the Army to 38,000. In 1740 another Augmentation was proposed of 10,325 to 50,515 already on foot, and
protested

protested against by near 40 Lords. In the year 1743 we had 23,000 Military and 11,550 Marines.

All these Debates in the Lords were attended with similar discussions in the Commons; but as usual to no effect, the System of ministerial bribery which Clifford had introduced in the time of Charles the 2d. which William improved, and Walpole perfected, and which, until *the present immaculate administration*, has never been lost Sight of, prevented any successful opposition to these measures of the Court. I have omitted for the sake of brevity, the very important struggles during all this period from the time of Charles 1st. on the Subject of Courts Martial, but they well deserve to be traced by those who would form a true Judgment of the Character and effects of Monarchical Government.

The Military Peace Establishment of Great Britain has not materially varied during this reign. I have not the means of being very accurate, but the following is near the truth; the forces constantly maintained in Great Britain are about 18,000—the annual Expence of the Army establishment altogether, is about 1800,000£; and that of the ordnance office for Land Services, about 450,000£.

Sir John Sinclair* estimates the general Expences of the peace Establishment upon the average since the revolution as follows:

During the reign of King William	1,907,455
Queen Anne	1,965,605
George I.	2,583,000
George II.	2,766,000
George III. Anno 1770, including the Civil List	4,322,972
Estimate of the peace establishment in future.	4,937,274

So that our *peace establishment* has increased since the reign of King William, above THREE MILLION STERLING ANNUALLY! what it will amount to hereafter, God knows.

The Expences of the various Wars, since the revolution, including the amount of the Supplies raised within the year, he gives as follows: ||

* History of the public revenue, 4to. v. 2. page 98. || ibid. p. 99.

Expences of War during the reign of William III.	30,447,382
Queen Anne	43,360,003
George I.	6,048,267
Expence of the War begun Anno 1739	46,418,689
Ditto of the War begun Anno 1756	111,271,996
Ditto of the American War	139,171,876
Ditto of the late Armament	311,385
	<hr/>
	£ 377,029,598

Let the reader reflect a little on this enormous Sum; and on the unestimated and incalculable Detriment to Agriculture, Manufactures, Commerce, and Population, which these Wars must have occasioned.—Let him conjecture what the Nation might have been; and then let him draw his own Conclusions. Of the 18,000 men thus kept up in Great Britain, in time of profound peace, where is the necessity of ONE MAN? If our Navy is what it ought to be, there can be no invasion from abroad—If Government is what it ought to be, there can be no insurrection at home—And if his Majesty wants Guards, why cannot he, like most of his predecessors, look upon the people as his Guards? When the Duke of Alanson came over to England to the Court of Queen Elizabeth, after admiring the Splendor of her Court and the Conduct of her Government, “but where are your Majesty’s Guards?” says he. This question she resolved a few days after, when taking him in her Coach thro’ the City, and pointing to the people, who received her in Crouds with repeated acclamations, “these my Lord, “ says she, are my Guards.”

During the reign of King William, when the power of the French King was the strongest; when Louis the XIVth the most ambitious Monarch of Europe, maintained an army of 450,000 men, and so far from being friendly to Great Britain, personally hated the Monarch on the Throne, 10,000 men were the utmost that the Parliament thought necessary; and were it not from a desire of ending the persevering attempts of the King to establish a military system in time of peace, they would probably have deemed half that number far more than enough. Now, when we are at peace with all the World, when the only Power which could furnish a pretence for a standing army has taken away every former pretext on her part, we are to maintain 18,000

Soldiers in Great Britain! The People, the taxed and oppressed People, have a right to know for what purpose, and it is to be hoped they will know.

If then, there be no enemies foreign or domestic, why this Swarm of Military overrunning the Land? And why degrade and neglect that noble and constitutional defence, the national Militia? Is it because an army, being a separate body from the people, have a separate Interest and an *esprit de Corps*; and that they are blindly subservient to the will of their leaders? while a Militia, being part of the Nation, feel themselves Citizens as well as Soldiers, and are therefore not convertible into the Instruments of arbitrary Power? Certainly the system now pursued, is open to these Questions and these Suspicions.

But the expence of a military Establishment, is far from being the only objection to which it is liable, even supposing that it had not the other tendencies already mentioned. At home and abroad our standing army during peace, amounts to about 40,000 Men. These must of necessity consist of Men in the prime of Life, and who in the common course of things, if they were not soldiers would be fathers of Families, and contributors to the common Stock of useful Industry and Population. But their profession as Soldiers renders a family extremely inconvenient if not insupportable, to at least two thirds of the number, upon a very moderate computation. Forty thousand Soldiers therefore may reasonably be computed as an annual Loss to the national Population of at least 50,000 Children; and they form an increase of *unproductive* Inhabitants (beside the expence) to the whole Amount in number of the Establishment.

But Celibacy does not eradicate the common propensities of our Nature, and a standing Army therefore is from necessity, a perpetual establishment of national debauchery, for which not the Soldiers but the Government are blameable and accountable. Nor is this the only offence against Morality to which a Military System is liable, and I am sometimes lost in astonishment and concern, that any man can voluntarily adopt a profession so repugnant to common sense and common humanity; so slavish in its principle and practice, and whose services are so ill requited. It is too much the fashion among Writers who wish well to their Country and to the Cause of Liberty, to inveigh not only against the Profession but the Professors—not only against a Soldiery,

Soldiery, but against Soldiers. I am anxious not to be suspected of this Intention. I am seriously of opinion, that in this nation at least, where the Army is not formed by tyrannical compulsion, but for the most part by voluntary enlistment, the Soldiers are the flower of the nation, not merely in form of Body, but in qualities of mind. The young Men who enter into the Army, are obviously tempted to prefer the seducing occupations of a military life, in consequence of possessing naturally a greater flow of animal Spirits, a greater portion of Courage, a more ardent desire of Distinction, and superior activity of Disposition to their neighbours. They have all the qualities that we expect to find in young men, in a superior degree to the youth of their own standing; and are for the same reason, more thoughtless and inattentive both to their own Interest and their moral duties. Unluckily for them, the instant they become soldiers they are bound by their profession to *think* no more. They are taught to become Machines in the hands of their Officers, and to pay the most servile and implicit obedience to the commands of their Superiors, of whatever nature they may be. Thus are the mental faculties benumbed, and every good quality of the Man, is sunk in the Machine.

Were not this the Case, were it not that thought and reflection are either totally laid aside, or sedulously suppressed, how can we account for a *Man* becoming a *Soldier*? For in the eye of reason and reflection, what is a Soldier? A person who professes to renounce all free-agency, to have no will of his own, and to submit himself, body and mind, to the will of another—whose particular trade it is to hold himself in readiness to put his fellow Creature to death, whether friend or enemy, citizen or foreigner, at the command of another, without enquiring into the reason or propriety of the Command; for the professional creed, the Sum and Substance of a Soldier's Duty, is *implicit Obedience*; it is his business to *act*, and he permits his Commander to *think* for him.—Who is contented to abjure all family comfort and domestic society—who gives up the character of a Citizen for the more honourable title, as he is taught to deem it, of his Majesty's *Servant*—who in his duty to his Commander, sinks all concern for his duty to his Country, being denied the right of investigating the propriety of the orders he receives—who on his entrance into this voluntary State of permanent Servitude, renounces the boast and

pride of an Englishman, *the trial by Jury*, and submits to the Judgment, not of his Equals, who could feel for his Situation when accused, but of his Superiors, who decide too frequently on offences which they never can experience the temptation to commit. The Punishments of a Soldier are severe and degrading; his Duties servilely obedient; and to crown the whole, his Wages far too small for comfortable Subsistence, and below the common average of an industrious day Labourer. Thus renouncing his Duties as a Man, and his Rights as an Englishman—thus living in a perpetual State of mental Degradation, always ill paid in proportion to his Labour, and frequently ill provided when his daily task is over—cajoled with the title of Gentleman, that his vanity may be made subservient to the Interest of his employers—and flogged like a Slave when he deserts from a profession which a Man of Spirit and Reflection can, with difficulty approve—he lives, uncomfortably to himself, and unprofitably to the community—a character hardly to be blamed, but much to be pitied, I have no doubt whatever but the time approaches, when the Nations of Europe will see their true Interest in the mild System of peace on Earth and good will toward Men, and that a Soldier will be unnecessary and unknown. Till that time comes, it is much to be wished that the situation of the Military should be made less degrading and more comfortable: that they should be better paid, and better fed, and better taught: that they should be permitted to know that a Soldier ought to be a Citizen, and that altho' the perpetual servitude of one man to another man is degrading to the human Character, the servitude of a Citizen to his Country, is of all employments the most honourable, and of all Duties the most sacred. I hope most devoutly that the time may never come, in this Country, when a national Struggle between Oppression on one Side and Freedom on the other, must be decided by the fate of Arms—I am now, to the best of my Judgment and Abilities, labouring to prevent the possibility, by urging a timely reform in those errors and abuses in the Government of the Country that are too notorious to be defended or denied: but if that time of national disaster should arrive, I trust the Soldiers of Great Britain will feel their rights as Men, and their duties as Englishmen, and become not the Enslavers but the Protectors of their Country.

I have

I have dwelt thus long on the Subject of *Standing Armies*, because I think it an Object of very great national Importance, about which *the People are asleep*. For my own part, I should be puzzled to assign one good reason for the maintaining of one regiment throughout Great Britain at this present moment; when at the same time it seems to be taken for granted, that we cannot do without 18,000 men.*

The preceding facts relating to a Standing Army, lead me farther to remark that these privileged orders are also dangerous to public tranquility from their Systematic opposition to the Claims of the people, and to all peaceable proposals of Improvement and Reformation—Having, for the most part, the power of the State in their own hands, and having a common interest in opposing all *Innovations* but such as they make themselves, and connive at for their common benefit, they are enabled to treat with insolent Contempt or affected Indignation, the well-founded Clamours of the multitude, and to suppress all attempts on the part of the people to meliorate their Condition, or stem the torrent of public Corruption. Thus they proceed till oppression can no longer be borne, and the dreadful remedy of intestine war, is the only resource to which the nation can fly. For the most part on such occasions, the People have only changed one set of Tyrants for another; America and France have taught the world that the only Revolution worth making, is a Revolution not for the Sake of Princes, but of Principles, not of Men but of Maxims.

“ For a Nation to change the form of its Government, “ (says M. LA FAYETTE), it is sufficient that the wills it.” With respect to the right, this is universally true; but the practice is attended with danger, and with difficulty, where hostile Corporations of privileged orders are ever on the watch against public Liberty, and ever ready to defend their iniquitous claims, against the requisitions of the People. § In America, where the people are not a herd of Subjects to any privileged order; where they are not governed by hereditary rulers, who have separate Interests from those of the

* I believe the Military are usually enlisted for Life, while the Army is only legally from Year to Year. Quere. Whether any enlistment is valid beyond the period when the existing Mutiny-bill expires?

§ La Constitution Angleise que vous vantez pardessus tout, est elle autre chose qu'un Complication de chaines assez artiflement combinées assez adroitement déguisées, pour que le poids en soit presqu' insensible au Peuple?

the nation, but by their own immediate agents and representatives, whom they continue no longer than while they do their duty, such changes and improvements in their respective Governments, as Circumstances make necessary, are frequent and easy; accomplished without opposition or disturbance; and tho' such as would shake an European Nation to its centre, are hardly known in Europe. While with us, the privileged orders are tremblingly alive to the danger of *Innovation*; they view every Inlet of political knowledge with a jealous eye and menacing aspect, and they cling to the most flagrant abuses, as to the most sacred of rights.

No reflecting Man, can look back at the last half Century, or consider the probabilities of the next, without seeing clearly that the Revolution of Europe is at hand. In this Country as in others, the day of Reformation must come. The true friends of the People, aware of the Danger that must inevitably ensue from a long continuance of privileged Obsturacy, cry out for early and peaceable Reformation. For the sake of these orders, it is to be hoped they will not cry out in vain; less tired with increasing oppression, and bending under the burthen of public Servitude, an irritated people may demand a restoration of their long lost rights, and Kings, and Bishops, and Nobles, be irrevocably swept away in the dreadful torrent of public resentment.

Moreover this hereditary System of privileged orders is *unjust* as well as dangerous. The people, if they were willing, have not the right to create any power whatever which shall be independent of themselves; they cannot give that

Mais repondez moi,appelez-vous Liberte un etat dont le peuple ne pourroit sortir que par Violence si telle etoit sa Volonte? Une Nation est elle libre, quand l'Insurrection est la seule voie que lui soit ouverte pour changer le forme du Gouvernement auquel elle est assujettie? Il y a tres-loin de la Volonte de la Majorite à l'acte de l'Insurrection. Il faut que le besoin du Change-ment soit extreme, pour que cette Volonte se manifeste,bien hautement, pour que les hommes eclairés puissent en juger les effets, et pour queles plus hardis donnent le signal de la Rupture. Le Gouvernement qui à en sa possestion la force publique, a tous les moyens d'arrêter le premières fecoufes, et de prevenir un eclat general. Entre la volonté d'une Nation paisiblement et legalement interrogée et le colere d'un peuple qui brie violement un Gouvernement insupportable, la distance est immense. C'est la difference qui existe entre un homme jouissant de sa liberté naturelle, et un esclave furieux que rompt ses fers pour les reprendre. Vous conviendrez bien que si la majorité du peuple Anglois ne vouloit plus ni Roi ni Chambre-haute, il faudroit verser dix fois plus de Sang pour detruire ces deux Institutions Aristocratiques que pour renverser à Constantinople toute la puissance du grand Seigneur. (De la Propriété dans ses Rapports avec le Droit politique. 18mo. p. XII.)

that authority which they do not possess. It must be allowed that (unless in the case of Usurpation, which sets the impropriety of Privileges beyond doubt), these orders cannot be created but by the voice of the Majority, and for the good of the Majority: if they answer not the end of their Creation, the reason of their Continuance fails, and therefore so far from claiming a right to exist independent of the will of the People, they *ought not* to exist at all. But whether they do answer the purpose of their Creation or not, can only be decided by the Sentiments of the Majority for whose good they were created. So that in all Cases they must of right be amenable to the will of the Community, as the sole Judge of the propriety of their Continuance.

“ I would ask (says a French Writer already quoted*) “ how you will manage to create these *independent Powers*? “ Of what elements and materials are the People composed, “ that they can produce from their body powers which “ shall become *independent* of them? How can they give “ a Pre-eminence to any one, which they have no right to “ take away? In short, by what means can a minority of “ any kind acquire an *Independence* of that majority from “ which it originally derived its Authority?

“ You must allow, that for the purpose of obtaining “ these powers *independent* of the people, you must have “ recourse to something superior to the people; for you will “ never persuade them that they have given existence to a “ power which they cannot annihilate. You must therefore call in the divine right, or some other imaginary “ Authority as a foundation for these *independent Institutions*, to furnish a Title that they may at all times hold “ out to the Nation when it thinks fit to contest this asserted *Independence*. Kings and Aristocrats, do what “ they will, must found their Rights on a Commission from “ the Deity, or on the choice of the people. In the first “ Case I shall willingly acknowledge their *Independence* on “ the indispensible Condition that they shew me their Delegation from on high: in the other case they are no more “ than the *Delegates of a Democracy*.”

“ But they have at all times held this last Title in such “ dread and Abhorrence, that they have spared no pains to “ assume the other; and for greater surety herein, they “ have

* *De la Propriété*, p. III.

“ have always connected *God* and the *sword*. These two words contain a compleat history of the human race, from the most ancient Annals to our own Day; and the armed Theocracy striving against the indestructible Sentiment of natural Equality, offers an abridgement of all the Revolutions of Empires.”

But if the people cannot have a right to create Powers and Privileges irrevocable and uncontrollable by themselves, still less have they a right to create such Powers and Privileges descendible in hereditary succession, at the expence of and uncontrollable by Posterity. All Government is or ought to be instituted for the happiness of the people who submit to be governed; but as it is impossible for the present Generation to put themselves exactly in the Situation wherein the next Generation will be, the present cannot be the proper Judges of what will best conduce to the happiness of the next—Posterity alone will be in possession of the facts necessary to decide upon the means to this end, and therefore Posterity alone can judge for itself.

Also, for the same reasons that the present Generation has a right to pursue its own Judgment and Inclination, the next will have the right to do the same. Neither can any good Argument be assigned, why every succeeding Generation, to the end of time, should be controll'd by the present, even supposing that Knowledge and Experience were not progressive.—Judging, therefore, from theoretical reasoning, hereditary privileges and functions are void, *ab initio*, being established by incompetent authority at the best.

These privileged orders are also unjust to the *Community*, because they form a monopoly of public functions, more or less extensive: and it is well known that where business is to be done, it is best done with Competition, and always comparatively ill done by those who are careless of public approbation, because independent of public opinion. Hence the People are deprived of the benefit which would arise from employing men of known abilities and experience in offices now filled by hereditary claimants. In those cases of hereditary Privileges, where there are no functions to be fulfilled—no duties to be performed—where they are the mere sinecures of aristocratic Vanity, the Injustice is still more glaring.

They are unjust also to *men of Experience and Abilities*, who are thus shut out from the common chance of succeeding

succeeding to the political functions for which their Talents and their Studies have best fitted them, and deprived, in a great measure, of the due reward of meritorious attainment.

Moreover "as Wisdom cannot be made hereditary, Power ought not;" for the sole reason of conferring the one, is the presumed Existence of the other. But this cannot be rationally presumed in the case of hereditary succession, and the presumption, if not directly contrary to, is utterly unsupported by common Experience.

Moreover this System of Privileged Orders is supported by that execrable Violation of the plainest dictates of natural Affection, of Justice and Humanity, the Law of *Primogeniture*. A Law, by which the ties of domestic union are broken, and every Child but the first-born, unfeelingly doomed to Indigence and Dependance, that the eldest may support the family pride in all the splendor of luxurious ostentation. It is impossible to calculate the sum of Benefit prevented, and Evil occasioned, by the prevalence of this iniquitous System. The Mass of Industry and Exertion that would necessarily have been produced by the equal Division of large fortunes among the Children of rich families, would long ago have doubled in all probability the Wealth and Prosperity of Europe. It would have added and would still add, to the productive instead of the unproductive Class of Inhabitants, to the Bees instead of the Drones of the Hive; it would soon render Idleness unfashionable, and Luxury impossible; it would contribute to the solid enjoyment of life, by a general substitution of Comforts and Conveniences for Glitter and Parade; it would cut off from the Sources of Vice by the discouragement of Celibacy, and it would encourage population because Industry is Patrimony; it would increase domestic felicity, for Affection and not Avarice would lead our youth to the altar, and the seeds of envy and jealousy, of filial disobedience and fraternal dissension would be nourished no more; personal strength and national beauty would be gainers by the change, for peace and plenty, and moderate labour would present their ruddy offspring to the state, and the friends of mankind would less frequently commiserate the ghastly progeny of effeminate indulgence, debauchery and disease. Thus might our Wastes be cultivated, Agriculture supported, Manufactures improved, and Commerce extended. The Axe indeed would be laid to the root of aristocratic Genealogy, and hereditary

Privilege would mourn over the loss of her Coadjutor, and would ficken and decay when unsupported by the sister-aid of Primogeniture; but the Future Generation, freed from these canker-worms of Society, would joyfully celebrate the Period of internal prosperity and external peace; and exclaim with the Poet,

“ *En nova Progenies, et rerum nascitur Ordo!*”

Such are the objections to the *THEORY of Privileged Orders*; and for the reasons I have thus given in the preceding pages, and others of a similar tendency to be met with in the books I have quoted, I should most assuredly lift up my voice against the admission of this System in whole or in part, wherever a *new form of Government* should be proposed, under which it would be my lot to become a Citizen. I have adduced instances of illustration from English History in preference, because if the Privileged Orders be of some use, and of slight detriment any where, it is in this Country: if they will bear examination under any, they surely will under the boasted *British Constitution*. It in this Country therefore, that they are to be viewed under their most favourable Aspect—here, where we rejoice in possessing a *limited Monarchy*, and make it our pride and boast that hereditary functions and distinctions are checked, and balanced, and controuled—not left to the free course of those obvious tendencies which the Theory of them would indicate, but confined as far as political foresight could confine them within the pale of public Utility. I grant that in proportion as they are thus controuled, they are less detrimental here than in other Countries, and perhaps, productive of as much occasional Utility as the Nature of them will permit. But here and every where they appear to me, to possess much more Influence than Necessity will warrant, and they are chiefly indebted for their present existence to the peaceable Temper and compromising spirit of the Times.

I should not be much surprised, nor (for my own Sake) should I be much concerned if the present adduction of Facts and Arguments respecting the Theory of Government, should be tortured into a *LIBEL* on the British Constitution. Even while I have been penning this Vindication of a measure which I shall always consider as honourable and praiseworthy, the name of our gracious Sov'reign (if public con-

struction

struction be well-founded) has been most impudently and atrociously perverted to the base purposes of CALUMNY and FALSEHOOD against Mr. Watt and myself, in the late Proclamation. I am well aware, and I willingly admit that under the present Constitution of Great Britain, no public measure whatever is personally attributable to his Majesty, and I attribute none to him; otherwise I might be tempted to pay some respect even to this malevolent, but contemptible performance; as it is, it deserves none. Malevolent and contemptible I call it, for what but Malevolence could dictate a Publication so evidently fitted to prejudice and inflame the public against actions right in themselves, and not forbidden by the Law, and against Persons of unblemished Character, and acting from the best Intentions. Contemptible it is, because it exhibits the Weakness as well as the Malignity of those who framed it; and so compleatly has it counteracted its own Intentions by encreasing the Circulation of those writings to which it alludes, and the reputation of those Persons whose Characters it attacks, that one would more than suspect Mr. Burke to have been consulted on the occasion. Had the Correspondencies alluded to in the proclamation been seditious in reality, as they are falsely called in that Paper, there is little doubt but the engines of the Law would have been set to work against them long ago and with respect to those, entered into by Mr. Watt and myself on the part of the Manchester Society, the reader shall have an opportunity of judging for himself. I think the time is not far distant when the People however mistaken they may be at present, will regard it as we do now, an honour conferred on Mr. Watt and myself, that public report has connected our names on this occasion with that of THOMAS PAINE.

The world however begins now to suspect that the present tender concern for the BRITISH CONSTITUTION is carried to a very imprudent, at least, if not to a very unwarrantable excess. In the fashionable System of political Botany, it is a Sensitive-Plant, shrinking from the slightest breath of enquiry; and therefore strongly fenced round from too close an Inspection, with the thorns and briars of the Law; while the Attorney General, like the Angel of Punishment at the Gate of Paradise, guards the entrance into this holy ground, and brandishes an *ex officio* Information to strike Terror into the heart of each bold intruder. We are re-

quired to take upon trust the MYSTERIES of this far-famed Constitution; and to subscribe the political Infallibility, not only of our Ministers for the time being, but of our Ancestors also, " from time whereof the Memory of Man runneth not to the contrary." The more extravagant and more numerous the Absurdities we consent to believe, the greater our merit; and we are taught to know that in Politics as in Religion, where Reason ends, Faith begins.

" But Heretics there are (Mr. Burke calls them Atheists) " in Politics as well as Religion," who affect to believe only upon Conviction—who are convinced only upon enquiry—and who think the public have a right to the full benefit of their Investigations, upon Subjects in which the public are so deeply concerned. To such men, and to the world, some more convincing Arguments must be adduced than are contained in the angry Manuscripts of an Information for Libel. This will have no other effect than to augment the evil, to excite enquiry, and like the old Ecclesiastical argument of Fire and Faggot, (disused but not dismissed) to encrease the number of heretical unbelievers. For my own part, I cannot conceive what a Constitution is good for, whose principles will not bear examination; nor how that Country can be free, where men are to be punished for peaceably endeavouring to point out to their fellow Citizens the seeming errors and defects in the Government under which they live. I cannot conceive how any improvement could ever have taken place, if this System of State-Inquisition had been rigourously pursued; or how any improvement can take place hereafter if all Sources of Information are thus for ever to be closed. If a man excites his fellow Citizens to revolt, he must take the consequences of his boldnes or his temerity: but if he barely excites them to examination and enquiry, Despotism alone can treat him as a delinquent. Even tho' he should speak of Abuses in terms of honest Indignation proportionate to their enormity, it seems to me that he does no more than a serious belief of the charges he advances would incite him to do; and while he recommends those peaceable means of reformation which the Law and the Constitution have regularly authorized, who can charge upon him his Patriotism as a Crime? Those, and those only are *Libellists* of the Constitution, who prohibit discussion; who punish Investigation; who reply to Facts by a Fine, and to Arguments by the Pillory;

Pillory; and who like the true Slave-drivers of Despotism, stand ready with the Lash of the Law to flog the saucy Sons of enquiry into torpid Apathy and quiet Submission.

But notwithstanding I have thus strongly stated the objections that occur to me against the Theory of Privileged Orders, and their admission into a new-found State, the question is very different with respect to this Country where they have existed for ages, and still exist under Circumstances as I have before admitted less detrimental to public Liberty and national Prosperity, than in almost any other European Kingdom. Foreseeing their tendency to encrease their own power at the expence of the Community, our Ancestors who never dreamed of laying them aside entirely (except during the period of the Commonwealth), divided them into two distinct Corporations; that each having a separate *Esprit de Corps*, might be a check to each others encroachments; and that the People might always have the chance of being applied to in the last resort. Unfortunately the House of Commons has been considered as synonymous with the people; in direct opposition to matter of fact and common Sense. The House of Commons it is well known are not the Representatives of the People; it is not *there* that the Voice of the People is heard; that house is more a representation of the Lords than the Commons of Great Britain; and the salutary check to the privileged orders, intended by the Spirit of the Constitution to be placed in the democracy of the Country, is in consequence, almost annihilated. If it were necessary to bring proofs of this notorious Truth, they are abundant in Willis's *Notitia Parliamentaria*, in Burgh's *Political Disquisitions*, and still more compleatly in Oldfield's *History of the Boroughs of Great Britain* lately published; which no man of common Sense and common honesty can peruse, without execrating the folly or the knavery of those, who unblushingly vindicate the present System of Fraud, Corruption and Intrigue. To restore this imperfect State of parliamentary representation to its constitutional Vigour—to create what has never yet been seen in this Country, a full, fair, and adequate representation of the People in the *lower House* of Parliament (as the insolence of Privilege has contemptuously termed it)—to ensure upon all occasions that the voice of the People and the voice of the House of Commons shall be the same, and that the representatives of the people shall be under the due Controul of those who send

send them by means of annual or triennial elections—is the sole end and aim of the friends of British Liberty almost without exception. Were this reform to take place effectually by means of peaceable but manly applications to Parliament, and associations among the People directed to this Purpose, I am satisfied, that altho' our Constitution would be far from perfect, it would still ensure to the people all the essential Advantages of Government; and that the objections to it on account of the existence of privileged orders, would not justify any friend to his Country in attempting a Revolution under such Circumstances.

By an EFFECTUAL Reform however, I do not mean the paltry Manceuvre of disfranchising the Boroughs and adding to the County Members; nor the equally objectionable Measure, of admitting only taxable householders to vote, altho' formerly I had doubts upon this Subject. But it cannot be denied that by this means, the larger part of the Community, the most important part of the Community, the most oppressed, the most industrious part of the Community, those who having the most reason to complain, complain the least; the Cottager, the Mechanic, and the Day-Labourer, (or as that inveterate Enemy of human kind Mr. Burke would call them, the Swinish Multitude) are placed in perpetual Subjection to a Corporation, an Aristocracy of Property, more or less extended. I do not mean this. It is impossible to defend the System of disfranchising a fellow Citizen, because he is not so rich as his more favoured Neighbour. Under any State of Society Property always has had and will have, full as much Influence as it ought; and it is gross Ignorance in Politics to add so many artificial to the natural Inequalities among Men. Neither am I prepared to believe that public Spirit and Independence is exclusively confined to the rich: so far as my experience goes, the direct contrary is the fact; and I almost suspect that "it is as easy for a Camel to go thro' the eye of a needle" as for a man of large property to be a thorough Patriot. I am not prepared to believe that public Spirit is not among the Poor Man's Virtues; I know and confess the temptations he is sometimes under to sacrifice his political opinions for his daily bread; but so far as I have been able to judge, it is not from want of principle that the poor give way, but from want of Knowledge: kept, as they are, in the most deplorable state of Ignorance and unenlightened Indolence.

able ignorance of their political rights—encouraged to work hard and to drink hard, but to think little and to read nothing—no wonder they should barter their birth right for a mess of pottage, when they know too well the value of the one, and know nothing about the other. Supposing, however, that the want of independence may be a Crime attached to Poverty; is it not evident that the way to create it if it does not exist, and to confirm it if it does, is to take for granted its existence? Alas! among other robberies committed upon the poor, they are robbed of their good fame, and their honest character, by proud and privileged Law-givers: “depart (it is in fact said by the small part of “a nation to the larger), depart ye Wretches, ye Swinish “Multitude, ye Scum of the Earth; ye are guilty of that “epitome of all the Crimes of the Decalogue, ye are con-“victed of Poverty! What rights can ye pretend to, who “have not a penny in your pockets? Away to your dismal “habitations, and your scanty fare, go work and be content-“ed.” How opposite are the Sentiments of Scripture and modern Politicians! The Bible (in the text above quoted) declares that riches are an obstacle in the way to the Kingdom of Heaven; while among European Legislators, Poverty and Virtue are deemed incompatible! Degrade a Man in his own opinion, stigmatize him by legal Suspicion, take for granted that he has no Character to lose, and you go the sure way to work to make him in reality what you believe him to be. We have done so by the Jews. On the contrary, let him know that you place confidence in his Integrity, that he *has* a Character to lose by improper behaviour, and that you expect as a matter of course, that he will act as he ought—the chances are, that he will feel his own Dignity, and justify the expectations you entertain of his good Conduct. Laws make Manners. It is a Crime, aye, and a foul Crime against human Nature, systematically to debase in the eye of the public, and in their own opinion, so large a portion of Mankind as the Poor unhappily form.

Moreover, those who have little, deserve to have that little the more carefully protected; the less a man possesses, the less he can spare from his narrow Store; and at any rate even the poorest are possessors of the most invaluable species of Property, Life, and Liberty, and Labour. To infringe upon these directly or indirectly without the consent of the

Owner,

Owner, is neither more nor less than Tyranny in the Law that enacts it, and Slavery in the Object who is compelled to submit to it.

Neither can it be truly said that the Poor Man pays no taxes; for he expends the produce of his Labour in the most productive Articles of modern Taxation, the Necessaries of Life. The Fire with which he warms his frozen limbs, and dresses his scanty morsel—the Candle that enables his family to toil at the spinning wheel, or the loom, during those hours which the middling classes devote to relaxation from business, and the great to the Zenith of their pleasurable Career—the small beer that washes down his homely repast—every morsel of his food, every article of his apparel, and even the scanty furniture of his Cottage are all affected by the extravagance, and mismanagement of those who govern. The more taxes are required, the more hours he must labour to supply his wants, and the more distant his prospect of obtaining the comforts and conveniences of Existence.

How little the Interests of the Poor are taken care of, and how necessary it is that the voice of the Poor Man should be heard with attention and respect in the House of Commons, the numerous Inclosure bills are pregnant Instances, where, as in the fable of Nathan the prophet, the poor man's Lamb is seized, to encrease the numerous herds of his richer and more powerful Neighbours. Whereas, instead of dividing the commons and wastes among the rich, natural Justice and good Policy would teach us, to distribute them among the poor.* But we take good care to fulfil with the most scrupulous orthodoxy, that Text of Scripture “ Unto every one that hath, shall be given, and he shall have abundance, but from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he hath.”

A still more flagrant Instance of Cruelty and Injustice toward the Poor, is the Practice of *Impressing*. The Labour of the poor Man, constitutes the whole of his Wealth, and his domestic Connections almost the whole of his happiness. But on a sudden under the dubious authority of a Pres Warrant, he is cut off from his peaceful habitation and domestic Society, and forcibly dragged on board the floating Prifon

* There is a very important Book too little noticed, an Essay on the right to Property in Land, by Dr. Ogilvie. 8vo.

Prison of a Tender: he is compelled to labour in the dreadful Service of murdering his fellow Creatures at the command of his Superiors, and paid such scanty Wages, not as he can earn or deserves, but as the niggardly System of Government Finance thinks fit to allow. His Family meanwhile, who look up to him for Comfort and Subsistence, ignorant of his Misfortune, are anxiously expecting his wonted return; perhaps their homely repast for the night depended on his earnings for the day; but his usual hour of return to his family is gone by; each passing footstep, each noise of distant Similarity is eagerly listened to in vain; Hope, still draws out the lengthened evening till a sleepless night of lamentation and despair succeeds the dreary melancholy hours, of successive disappointment and fruitless expectation. The next or succeeding day brings the mournful tidings of his destiny, and leaves the widowed wife (perhaps the pregnant Mother) to eke out a comfortless existence under the accumulated pressure of Want, and Labour, and Sorrow, and Disease.

Innumerable are the Cases of this Nature, that must of necessity attend the practice of impressing for Soldiers and Mariners. But the miseries of the lower classes of Society are borne in torpid Silence, and patient Resignation. The feeble voice of suffering Poverty can seldom extend beyond the humble limits of her own habitation; still less can it penetrate the joyous Mansions of the Great, or intrude on the pompous occupations of the Statesman:—otherwise it might truly suggest, that even if wars *be* necessary, this tyrannical System of Violence and Robbery is not so. It is the offspring of State-Parsimony alone. Why not add a fourth or a half to the common wages, to induce Volunteers? Why not double the pay?—Why not?—Because the overgrown Fortunes of the rich Landholders, the Monopolizers of Wastes and Commons, would experience an almost imperceptible Diminution. While, by the good old Fashion of dragging away the Poor by means of a Press-Gang, no taxes are laid upon the Wealthy; and a due portion of the Swinish Multitude, the Scum of the Earth, are periodically swept away as food for powder.

Such are some among the numerous hardships of which the British poor have too much reason to complain. Indigence one would think, is of itself a sufficient Evil to an inhabitant of Society, without being held out as a Reproach,

or converted into a Crime. Why then should Slavery be added to Poverty, and the Rights of Man, be merged in the Misfortunes of the Citizen? A Citizen indeed is an improper Appellation; the poor Man is not a Citizen: for being denied even by the *Spirit of Constitution*, the privilege of Representation, he is subjected to the will of those who make and the power of those who execute the Laws; and he is at best but an Inhabitant of his native Land, for the benefit of his richer Neighbour.

Hence I cannot help regarding any scheme of Reform as insignificant to say no worse of it, which shall not include in the Scheme itself (without trifling to distant promises and fair professions) some effectual means of raising and meliorating the Condition of what are called the lower classes of the people. Patriots (as Dr. Johnson very shrewdly and sarcastically remarked), are fond of levelling down to themselves, but they seldom propose to level up to themselves. It is fit that this reproach should be done away from the advocates of a good Cause. It is the People, the lower Classes of Society, that constitute the Bulk* of Mankind, that form the great Mass of Capability, and present to the Politician the most important Object of national Improvement. For my own part, I care little in comparison for a reform that shall serve merely to diminish the Taxes paid by the rich, or gratify the Wishes of Senatorial Orators or would-be Statesmen, whether in or out of Parliament. Away with such half-measured Reformers—Men of Rank and Respectability, as they sometimes call themselves; who desire no farther reform than to extend the aristocratic monopoly of power, to that circle in which themselves are included; who make the people the stalking-horse to their designs, and the step-ladder to the official Situations which they aspire to obtain; who have temperance and moderation in their mouths, and pride and ambition in their hearts; and who raise the hue and cry of Violence, Innovation, and Republicanism, against every Man who looks beyond the petty interests of a Party, or includes in his notions of Patriotism, a desire to promote not the privileges of a Corporation, but the Rights of Man.

Hence

* Chalmers (Estimate of the Comparative State of Great Britain, page 195) computes that in 1781, the chargeable houses were 721,000, and the Cottages or dwellings of the poor 865,000.

Hence also, it is to me no matter of Surprize, that the People, the Multitude, feel no interest in the repeated outcries for Parliamentary Reform, when the evils they feel are hardly touched upon, and advantages held out which they have no ambition to enjoy. Who has yet talked* of dividing the Wastes and the Commons—of abolishing Tythes—of rewarding population—of comfortably providing for the old age of the Labourer, the Manufacturer, the Artificer—of exonerating the poor from the indirect Taxes which they pay without knowing it, as well as from the direct impositions which Ministers are afraid to lay on—and above all, of providing ample means of PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, that the Poor Man may know what his rights are, and what is the Object of Government, and what are the Duties of the Servants of the People. That he may become if he chuses, a human Creature, and not a Machine; and having the capacity of mental Improvement given to him by his Maker, that he may use as he ought, the Talent thus committed to his Care. Why should the truth be concealed? There is among us too much Inequality of Rank—too much Inequality of Riches—too much inequality of Labour. The Poor work too much and know too little: incessant Labour stupifies the mental faculties and produces an inclination to satisfy the Cravings of Nature, beyond the necessities of Nature. Hence the Amusements of the poor are gross; their hours of relaxation intemperate, and habits of drunkenness and Expence are insensibly formed,

L 2

till

* That conspicuous Friend of Mankind and admirable writer, Mr. Paine, must be excepted from this Question, as well as the Author of the Review of the Constitution of Great Britain, Mr. Ofwald, who promises a fresh addition of that well written and animated pamphlet.

§ I do not mean what the tools of Government would willingly fasten upon the Friends of the People, *an equal division of Property*. Superior Talents, superior Knowledge, and superior Industry, ought, on the plainest principles of Justice and Equity to enjoy superior advantages. Who would work that a Stranger might enjoy the profit of his Labour? Who would exert himself, if the accumulations of Industry and Frugality should be seized by the Idle and the Spendthrift? This would be a sure way to stop the progress of Improvement in every Department of Arts, Manufactures, Agriculture and Commerce, and annihilate Society itself. I mean that some direct or indirect Method, (either by the Scheme of an Agrarian Law, as proposed by Dr. Ogilvie, or by progressive Taxation, as proposed by Mr. Paine) should be adopted to prevent enormous Accumulations of Property in one hand, or in one Family. Whereas at present we have laws expressly to promote this.

till the whole Man is degraded, and Ignorance and Poverty linked with him as Companions for Life. I wish it were not true that these habits are rather encouraged than suppressed, that nine tenths of the nation may be mere machines to execute the Labour of which the other tenth enjoys the Profit.

My notions then of an effectual Reform in the Representation of the People, would take in the whole of that aristocratical Apostate, the Duke of Richmond's Idea in his Letter to Colonel Sharman. I would have the Man, whose Stake in the Community consists of Life, and Liberty, and Labour, with a Penny in his Pocket, to have an equal Voice in the Choice of Legislators, by whose Laws that Stake is to be protected, as another Man who has Life, and Liberty, and Labour, with a hundred thousand Pounds in his Pocket. In comparison with the three first Articles of the Catalogue, which are common to all Men, and which are the means to the acquisition of the rest, the last is of trifling moment; it is the small dust of the Balance; an Accident of Existence; of artificial and not of natural Importance; which when weighed against the solid Gifts of Nature to her common Offspring, will kick the Beam.

Nor, in my opinion, should the People omit to make it a fundamental Article of Instruction, of solemn charge, to their Representatives, that maturely but as speedily as may be, they should draw up and submit to the public for general Discussion during a limited Interval, a liberal Code of NATIONAL EDUCATION. The God of Nature has given to Men, not merely hands to labour, but a head to think: he has given him the capability of obtaining Knowledge, of mental Improvement, and of social Intercourse. One great use of Society is to bring these Capabilities into Action, that not only each Individual, but each Community of Individuals, and finally, the human race, by means of mutual Communication may proceed in the glorious Career of mutual and progressive Improvement. As it is, the major part of the Species from the total want of Education, are deprived of the means of obtaining Knowledge of any kind, except that which is absolutely necessary to their immediate subsistence. And for the most part, they are *insidiously* kept in a state of brutal Ignorance, and mental depression, that they may be led to regard their rulers as beings of a superior Class. Statesmen and Priests well know that knowledge is the mortal Enemy of State-craft and Priest-craft; and therefore

therefore in all Kingdoms and in all Ages, they have uniformly set their faces against discussion and enquiry. I beg my readers (of the lower class particularly, if this tract should happen to fall into their hands), to mark, that this is the cloven foot of Despotism, by which it may always be known whatever shape it may assume. "Leave the Care of your Souls to me," says the Priest; "of your Liberties and Properties to me," says the Statesman; "pay your Tithes and your Taxes, and put your trust in us. But carefully avoid all writings, and meetings, and Conversations about articles of belief or the Rights of Man: these are heretical and seditious. The means of Knowledge are the wicked contrivances of Atheists and Republicans—Wretches who despise the holy Doctrine of Infallibility in Church and State."

Under these Circumstances of national Ignorance, so prevalent among the lower Classes of Society, I know of no Scheme so likely to form the solid basis of future Reformation, nor any Institution more necessary as an Act of national Justice, than a well formed Plan of public Education. The whole of our conduct toward the Poor, seems to me a System of flagrant Iniquity. We put it out of their power to acquire Knowledge, because their scanty earnings will hardly afford the Means of Subsistence to a family; much less will they allow the expence of education.* Having thus contributed to degrade by neglecting our Duty toward them, having made them poor and kept them ignorant, we declare them unfit to be trusted, and thrust them out from any

* Charity Schools and Sunday Schools are, ~~if~~. Partial Remedies; and therefore unjustly. The great objects of education, at those places, so far as I have observed, are psalm-singing, and servile Civility to every passenger with a tolerable coat upon his back. 3dly. The children are sedulously educated in habits of bigotted Reverence for the Ministers of Religion, and the unintelligible jargon of orthodoxy. I do not make this observation, from any private desire to introduce the tenets of any other religious Sect. I disclaim all Connection with Religious Sects of every Denomination, observing and knowing that each has some petty interest of its own, paramount to every other Consideration; and that each forms a corporate body, actuated by a party spirit, seldom, if ever, in unison with the Interests of the nation. I want to see, one great Corporation, and one only permanent Corporation—that of the Community: then shall I see one great and permanent, one predominant interest—that of the Community. This period, I fear, altho' its advent be certain, I shall not see; but those days will come, *venient annis facula foris*. And altho' I shall not hail the presence of that Era among us, my leisure shall be unremittingly employed, and my best endeavours exerted to hasten its approach.

any Participation of the most essential rights of Man and a Citizen. Not content with this, our sanguinary code of criminal Law, equally a disgrace to common Sense and common humanity, is converted into an Instrument of legal Murder against the poor. It is related, I think, of one of the Tyrants of Syracuse, that his Laws were purposely engraved in so small a Character, and hung up so high, that the people were unable to read their Contents; and his Cruelty was glutted by punishing the miserable offenders against edicts impossible to be known; for his Maxim was the same with ours, *Ignorantia Legis neminem excusat.*§ Thus do we, when we condemn to death a poor wretch whose Situation has never enabled him to learn the common rudiments of Language, and whose poverty perhaps, and contempt of Life, has induced him to commit the crime against Society, for which our Laws so severely punish him. A well-digested System of NATIONAL EDUCATION, by affording to the poor the elements of Knowledge, would enable them to know their duties, and be a means of inculcating more effectually the propriety of attending to them; it would give them other Amusements after the Labours of the day, than habitual Intemperance; it would draw forth latent Ability, would give energy to Industry, and would raise the whole Man in the Scale of Being. Great indeed would be the advantages of a more general diffusion of Knowledge to the Nation: to Despotism, the Period of its Institution would be a day of solemn Dirge.

Until such a System of public Education can be compleatly established, the middling and poor Classes of Society cannot do better than to establish meetings and Clubs,* not for riot or revelling, nor yet for Treason or Sedition, but for reading and conversation; that they may gradually become informed what are the rights and what are the Duties of a Citizen; what privileges they are deprived of, to which they are fairly entitled; and in what respects their several Situations require to be ameliorated by a more wise and equitable System of Legislation. These Societies would do well to communicate and correspond with each other throughout the

§ When my Lords the Judges differ from each other in the Construction of a penal statute, or the application of a reported Case (nothing uncommon) what becomes of this fundamental Maxim of the Law?

* Some very good hints for associations of this kind are to be found in the MANCHESTER HERALD of June 16th, 1792.

the Kingdom. And when by the perusal of such Publications as treat on the great questions of Politics, the People have learnt that they are not a *Swinish Multitude*, but human beings; having equal rights and equal capacities for improvement in their respective Destinations, with those men who govern and despise them; let them unite in a firm and decided, but reasonable and respectful appeal to the Legislature, in behalf of those Claims which the People have a right to urge: not proposing a time-serving, compromising, half-measured plan of reformation; not relinquishing for the sake of themselves, what they ought to dwell upon for the sake of Posterity, but requiring the adoption of such Measures as shall effectually secure to the great mass of the Nation in their fullest extent a speedy restoration of their long lost Rights. *at a due time*

Such are the political Sentiments of "one of the worst Men in the Kingdom" according to Mr. Burke; and very sorry indeed should I be, considering Mr. Burke's notions of political virtue, had I merited his *Encomium*. *at a better time*

I shall not talk of the Pension which this disintered Politician has been so frequently accused of receiving in another man's name, from the Irish Establishment; for I doubt whether his Silence upon the occasion amounts to a demonstration of the Charge. I shall not dwell upon his doating attachment to the Queen of the French, whose character has been tainted by imputations of the blackest kind, for his Ideas of Virtue seem widely different from those of the Multitude, they are not formed upon the common Standard, nor do they harmonize with the common Sentiments of Mankind: perhaps as Goiters seem Beauties to the Inhabitants *ignorant than any nation in Europe*

* There are one or two other particulars that might attend a Scheme of Parliamentary Reform, which, tho' not of absolute necessity, appear to me of great Importance. 1. Exclusion by Rotation. If Parliaments were annual, no man should be eligible to more than three Parliaments in succession; he should be laid by, during the 4th at least: if biennial, the Members might be allowed to sit in two Parliaments, and laid aside during the third; *that they might not persuade themselves that they had a right to be elected.* 2. The good old custom of paying Wages to the Members should be restored: it is part of the British Constitution, and is adopted in France. If the People do not pay their Representatives, the Court will. A nation ought not to be under an obligation to an individual for Services which can be rewarded. It is clearly the Interest of the Nation to make it the Interest of their Representatives to do their duty. Hence they ought to be paid, not by the year, but in proportion to their attendance in Parliament. If the People pay them, they will be the Servants of the People; if the Court pays them they will be the Servants of the Court.

tants of the Alps, so moral Deformities, may be objects of reverential Admiration in the Judgement of Mr. Burke. I will not accuse him of indelicate cruelty toward our own Queen, or of want of Loyalty toward the King, at the melancholy period when the British Sovereign was afflicted with temporary Insanity: altho' Mr. Burke, regardless of a Wife and Mother on that occasion, might declare that the Almighty had HURLED the Monarch from his Throne, I shall lay no charge against him on this account, for he may since have atoned for past misdemeanors, and have made his peace at Court where his Sins against Majesty are forgiven, and his political Offences remembered no more. I shall not recall his ungentleman-like, outrageous abuse of his right honourable Enemies, now, his right honourable Friends, Lord North, Mr. Pitt, and Mr. Dundas: let him please himself in his Friendships and his Ennemities: he acted in these instances not hastily and capriciously, but with due premeditation; and with much pains and affiduity having dressed them up to his Taste in all the crimes of a Nero, then, and not till then, he adopts them for his associates, and takes them to his Bosom.* Neither shall I have much to say concerning "the hoofs of the Swinish Multitude;" nor shall I dwell on the exquisite Specimen of distributive Justice wherewith he has favoured the world, conceding to Bishops, such as those of Durham and Winchester, the paltry reward in present possession, of no more than Ten Thousand a Year,|| while to the Poor he recommends, to "respect that property of *which they cannot partake*. They "must labour to obtain what by Labour can be obtained; " and when they find, *as they commonly do*, the success dis- "proportioned to the Endeavour, they must be taught their "Consolation in the FINAL PROPORTIONS OF ETERNAL "JUSTICE!"||—On none of those Topics shall I detain my reader;

* "Did you never tell Lord North," (says a Member of the Revolution Society, I believe Major Scott,) to Mr. Burke, "that he would carry on the War as long as he could find money to bribe Gentlemen to say they believed him? Did you not once tell Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas that they had proposed, and the majority had adopted a Scheme that would have disgraced the infamous Reign of a Nero? I will not trouble you with further quotations now, tho' I have a hundred ready: and these assertions were not confined to the walls of your house, but were circulated by *yourself* in Pamphlets." Letter to the Rt. Hon. Mr. Burke. p. 18.

§ Reflections, p. 117. || Ibid, p. 154. ¶ Ibid, p. 35.

reader; contenting myself with a Delineation of Mr. Burke's *humanity* and *Patriotism*, in his own words.

In speaking of the persons put to death by the Multitude, during the early part of the French Revolution, he says, *If by effectual Punishment of the Guilty, they do not disavow that practice, and the threat of it too as a part of their policy; (a guilt, by the way of which the nation was never guilty, and a threat which they never made), if ever a foreign Prince enters into France, he must enter it as a country of Assassins. The mode of civilized War will not be practised; nor are the French, who act on the present System, entitled to it. They whose known policy it is to assassinate every Citizen whom they suspect to be discontented by their own Tyranny, and to corrupt the Soldiery of every open enemy, must look for no modified Hostility. All War which is not battle, will be military execution. This will beget acts of retaliation from you, and every retaliation will beget a new revenge. The hell hounds of War on all Sides, will be uncoupled and unmuzzled.* Such is Mr. Burke's advice, proceeding, no doubt, from the very Milk of human Kindness! Pity that his facts are no where to be found but in the fine phrenzy of his own poetic Imagination!

With the preceding passage I shall contrast the following Sentiments of Dr. Parr, who with becoming indignation, inveighs against "the Counfels of those Sanguinary Fanatics, who would unblushingly, and unfeelingly rouse the unsparing Sword of foreign Potentates, and point it without provocacion, without precedent, without any other plea than will, against the Bosoms of Frenchmen, contending with Frenchmen alone, upon French Ground alone, about French Rights, French Laws, and French Government alone.

" When it is urged, that Princes from their relation to Princes, have a common cause, and a cause too; it is meant virtually paramount to the rights of Subjects and of Men, the obvious answer is, that they who are not Princes have also a common cause, and the obvious consequence of the answer is, that if they are true to themselves, to their Neighbours, and to Posterity, Confederacy is to rise up against Confederacy, and deluge the world with blood."

" If indeed the threatened Crusade of ruffian Despots should be attempted, it will, in my Opinion, be an outrageous infringement upon the Law of Nations; it will be a savage Conspiracy against the written and the un-

“ written rights of Mankind; and *therefore*, in the sincerity
 “ of my Soul, I pray the righteous Governor of the uni-
 “ verse, the Creator of Men, and the King of Kings, I
 “ pray Him to abate the pride, to assuage the malice, and
 “ to confound all the Devices of all the parties, directly or
 “ indirectly leagued in this complicated Scene of guilt and
 “ horror! this insult upon the Dignity of human nature
 “ itself! this treason against the Majesty of God’s own
 “ Image, rational and immortal Man.”*

In the “ *Appeal from the old to the new Whigs*” (p. 33.) Mr. Burke, speaking of himself, § says, *He was the first man who on the hustings at a popular election rejected the Authority of Instructions from Constitutents, or who in any place has argued so fully against it. Perhaps the discredit into which that Doctrine of compulsive Instructions under our Constitution is since fallen, may be due in a great degree, to his opposing himself to it in that manner and on that occasion.*

*The reforms in the Representation, and the Bills for shortening the Duration of Parliaments, he uniformly and steadily opposed for many Years together in contradiction to many of his best friends.******

*Against the opinion of many friends, even against the solicitation of some of them, he opposed those of the Church Clergy, who had petitioned the house of Commons to be discharged from Subscription.******

These Instances, a few among many are produced as an answer to the insinuation of his having pursued high popular Courses, which in his late book (the Reflections) he has abandoned.

Such is Mr. Burke’s description of his own Character. Boldly rejecting the shallow Mask of Hypocrisy, he stands forward to the world the public professor of political Turpitude, the systematic opponent of every Species of reform, and in love with the very Sinfulness of Sin. Other offenders against the Rights of Man and the Improvement of Society have at least had the modesty to plead the common temptations and palliate their offences by the common excuses; they have been led astray by the prevalence of example, by the love of riches, or the thirst of power; all have had their motives extraneous to their Crimes. But excuses

* Sequel to the printed paper, &c. p. 73.

§ Altho’ this Pamphlet is anonymous, yet as it is universally understood and quoted as Mr. Burke’s, and bears with it intrinsic evidence of the Author. I ascribe it to him without hesitation.

excuses suit not the high-minded Iniquity of Mr. Burke's Politics, and he unblushingly obtrudes himself on the disgusted eye of the public, in all the nakedness and deformity of political Vice.

Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable
 Doing or suff'ring : but of this be sure
 To do ought good, never will be our task,
 But ever to do ill our sole Delight,
 As being contrary to that high will
 Which we resist.

MILTON.

Such is our Accuser; the professed opponent of the Rights of Man! May we never deserve his Panegyric.

FINIS.

APPENDIX.

Manchester, 8th May, 1792.

THE MANCHESTER CONSTITUTIONAL SOCIETY, finding that two of their Members were in PARIS upon private business, thought it right to desire them to communicate with the Patriotic Societies of France, for the purpose of "establishing a correspondence upon any occasion, in which the rights, interests, and happiness of Mankind were concerned." Such a correspondence has been proposed on the part of the Manchester Society, and has been acceded to by the "Society of Friends of the Constitution" in Paris, commonly known by the appellation of the Club of the Jacobins.

The MANCHESTER CONSTITUTIONAL SOCIETY has no secret correspondence, nor any wish to conceal their sentiments, their designs, or their conduct; and to prevent any casual or wilful misrepresentation of their communication with the French Societies in general, or with the Jacobins in particular, they publish the following translations of the Address of their Members to the Jacobin Society, of the Answer of the President, and of the letter from that Society to the Constitutional Society of Manchester.

THOMAS WALKER, President.

SAMUEL JACKSON, Secretary.

TRANSLATION of the ADDRESS presented by the Deputies of the Constitutional Society of Manchester, to the Society of Friends of the Constitution, sitting at the Jacobins in Paris, on the 13th of April, 1792.

BRETHREN AND FRIENDS,

We feel a sincere satisfaction in communicating to you the resolution by which our Brethren of the Constitutional Society of Manchester have appointed us their Deputies to the Patriotic Societies of France.

Now

Now that a concert is forming among the despotic powers of Europe, to overwhelm the cause of liberty and annihilate the rights of man, it will no doubt give you pleasure to be informed, that there exist every where, (even among those nations which the intrigues of Kings and Courtiers have too frequently compelled to be at enmity), men who feel strongly interested in your cause—the cause not merely of the French, but of all mankind.

The light which you have thrown upon the true principles of Politics and the natural Rights of Man, a light which in England faintly gleams amidst the darkness of civil ignorance, ought to teach us that the period is at length arrived to abolish all national prejudice, and for the freemen of every country to salute each other as brethren.—Too long have the machinations of despots, always in opposition to the dictates of nature, taught the nations of the earth to regard each other as enemies.

Considering the Club of the Jacobins not merely as the friends of the Constitution of France, but also under the still more respectable title of friends of the human race, we request in the name of the Constitutional Society of Manchester, an amicable communication and correspondence with them, as the continuation at least, if not as the commencement of a general federation amongst the Patriotic Societies of Europe, having for its object the fraternal union of all men. Our society will be happy to join its efforts to yours in propagating those important principles of liberty, which alone can fix on a firm and immovable basis, the empire of peace and the happiness of mankind.

We congratulate the Club of the Jacobins on the involuntary homage which one of the despotic courts of Europe has already paid them, in pointing them out as the most determined enemies of arbitrary power. Proceed, Brethren, in the course of your philanthropic exertions, and continue to merit the execration of tyrants, and the benedictions of the human race!

(Signed)

THOMAS COOPER,
JAMES WATT, jun.

ANSWER of M. CARRA, Vice-President, in the absence of the President.
It is just 100 years since the English afforded a sublime example to the universe, in levelling the despotic pride of Kings,

Kings, and in exhibiting the first glimpse of a declaration of the Rights of Man in their constitutional charter. At that time the other nations of the globe were surrounded with the thick clouds of ignorance, and bent under the yoke of the most shameful servitude. At present the French have imitated your example, and imitated it with a degree of perfection which doubtless heretofore you were not permitted to attain, and which is no more than the natural and successive progress of human reason. At present also, it is the English who commence the general alliance of all nations, and which we may rest assured will make of one family the human race.—Yes, brethren and friends, the English and the French, re-united for ever by the ties of justice, humanity, and the most brotherly affection, will combat in union for the maintenance of their common liberty, and the perfectioning of their respective governments. In vain the ebullition of despotic rage among the tyrants of Europe, flatters itself, as formerly, to set one people at enmity with another, to augment the number of their slaves, or to gratify their revenge: the hour of these errors and illusions has passed—national animosities, fomented by the intrigue and imposture of Courts, are beginning to be extinguished. The French people, the French soldiers, and the French sailors, see none but brethren and friends among the same classes of the English, and earnestly desire to take them in their arms, and contract with them on the holy gospel of the Rights of Man, an eternal compact of concord and of peace. Already the English flag, united and entwined with the three-coloured flag of France, and the thirteen stripes of the brave Americans is suspended from the roofs of almost every patriotic society in France; already several civic feasts have been celebrated in almost every department of the empire, consecrating the alliance which we have sworn anew to observe with all the patriots of England in the persons of the deputies from the society of the famous town of Manchester. Friends, tell your fellow citizens, those men whom the genius of industry and of patriotism have rendered so dear to all the lovers of the arts of commerce and of humanity,—tell them that you have seen here, Frenchmen, (whose natural character has long been weighed down by slavery, but now arisen and developed by energetic sentiments of the Rights of Man and of Liberty) now breathing a spirit of universal philanthropy—seeing

none

none but brethren among men, and relations among people. Tell them that our courage and perseverance will stand every test, and that we have not sworn in vain to live freemen or to die. Tell them again (though the tyrants of Europe redouble their rage!) that the politics of the true patriots of France, and of the Jacobins so dreaded by the traitors and enemies of liberty, do not consist in desiring the glory and the prosperity of the countries that gave them birth, but the glory, the prosperity, and the liberty of every nation. Yes, this is the perpetual, unremitting object of the Jacobins; that is to say, of an immense majority of the nation, and in virtue of this happy disposition the friends of the Constitution at Paris, in its own name, and in the name of all the patriotic societies of the French empire, ties itself by an inviolable promise to the Constitutional Society of Manchester. The Assembly invites you to its meetings while you stay at Paris.

The society, in ordering this discourse to be printed, directs the transmission of it to all its affiliated societies, as well as to the Constitutional Society of Manchester.

(Signed)

CARRA, Vice-President.

DUCOS AND SALADIN,

Deputies to the National Assembly.

DEPERREY, Roi, DOPPET,

Secretaries.

*TRANSLATION of the LETTER from the Society of Friends
of the Constitution at Paris, to the Constitutional Society
of Manchester.*

FRIENDS AND BRETHREN,

The affectionate address communicated to us by your deputies, Messrs. Cooper and Watt, has rejoiced the heart of every honest Frenchman, and of every true friend of humanity and philosophy. The hour is at length arrived which ignorance has always looked upon as a chimera; that hour when nations hitherto at enmity begin to discover that it is in the order of nature, of reason, and of their true interests, to live as brethren, and to unite in earnest against the tyrants and oppressors of the human race. Happy Revolution of 1789! It is to that revolution we are indebted for the inappreciable advantage of seeing the two nations hastening to commence that sublime alliance which will one day unite all the inhabitants of the globe. No, it shall not be

be in the power of events to break those ties of relationship, and fraternity, which we hereby acknowledge and contract, with the good citizens of England, and particularly with our friends of the Constitutional Society of Manchester. This letter of formal affiliation, which we address to you as from the original society of Friends of the Constitution sitting at Paris, is a sure a pledge of our principles and of our sentiments. It will be an eternal monument of our mutual philanthropy, an indestructible proof of the progress of human reason, and will quickly furnish to the other parts of your empire, to Scotland and Ireland, an example worthy of imitation. We have no doubt that the moment is at hand, when thousands of patriotic deputies will assemble in the names of their respective nations, at some given place in Europe, to discuss there, the great interests of general humanity, of peace, and of universal liberty. This novel, and all powerful federation, whose sole view shall be the happiness and prosperity of the great family of the human race, will completely banish the paltry cunning and deceit of diplomatic intrigue; and those secret negotiations of fraud and imposture, which answer no other purpose, than to create division among nations, to subject them the more easily to oppression. But 'tis over; the sun of reason shines with meridian splendor all around, and in spite of the coalition of tyrants against us, the triumph of the friends of justice and humanity is certain. Worthy citizens of Manchester, you will participate in this triumph.

We are, with the profoundest sentiments of fraternal affection, your Brethren and Friends,

DEPERREY AND DOPPET, Secretaries.

CARRA, Vice-President.

PARIS, April 14th, 1792.

The 4th year of liberty.

As the following Correspondence is of a similar Nature with the preceding, and in some degree connected with it, I have thought fit to subjoin it. The reader will agree with me that it well deserves to be perused and remembered on account of its intrinsic Merit.

SOCIETY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION, May 18,
1792. At a Meeting held this Day, the following ADDRESS
to the FRIENDS of the CONSTITUTION at Paris, com-
monly called JACOBINS, and which was, by the direction of
this Society, sent to them last week, was ordered for Publication:

“ Brothers and Fellow-Citizens of the World,

“ The cordial and affectionate reception with which you
have honoured our worthy Countrymen, Mr. THOMAS
COOPER and Mr. JAMES WATT, Members of the Society of
Manchester, and united with our Society, has been commu-
nicated to us by the correspondence of those Gentlemen.

“ In offering you our congratulations on the glorious Re-
volution which your Nation has accomplished, we speak a
language which only sincerity can dictate.

“ The formality of Courts affords no example to us. To
do our thoughts justice, we give to the heart the liberty it
delights in, and hail you as Brothers.

“ It is not among the least of the Revolutions which time
is unfolding to an astonished world, that two Nations, nursed
by some wretched CRAFT in reciprocal hatred, should so sud-
denly break their common odious chain, and rush into amity.
The principle that can produce such an effect, is the offspring
of no earthly Court; and whilst it exhibits to us the expen-
sive iniquity of former polities, it enables us, with bold feli-
city, to say—We have done with them.

“ In contemplating the political condition of Nations, we
cannot conceive a more diabolical system of Government,
than that which has hitherto been generally practised over
the world. To feed the Avarice, and gratify the wickedness
of ambition, the fraternity of the human race has been
destroyed; as if the several Nations of the Earth had been
created by rival Gods. Man has not considered Man as the
work of one Creator.

“ The political institutions under which he has lived, have
been counter to whatever religion he professed. Instead of
that universal benevolence which the morality of every known
religion declares, he has been politically bred to consider
his species as his natural enemy, and to describe virtues and
vices by a Geographical Chart.

“ The principles we now declare are not peculiar to the
Society that addresses you. They are extending themselves,
with accumulating force, through every part of our country,
and derive strength from an union of causes which no other
principles admit.

“ The

“ The religious friend of man, of every denomination, records them as his own ; they animate the lover of rational liberty ; and they cherish the heart of the poor, now bending under an oppression of Taxes, by a prospect of relief.

“ We have against us only that same enemy, which is the enemy of Justice in all countries, a herd of Courtiers fattening on the spoil of the Public.

“ It would have given an additional triumph to our congratulations, if the equal Rights of Man (which are the foundation of your declaration of Rights) had been recognized by the Governments around you, and tranquilly established in all : But if despotism be still reserved to exhibit, by conspiracy and combination, a farther example of infamy to future ages ; that power that disposes of events, best knows the means of making that example finally beneficial to his creatures.

“ We have beheld your peaceable principles insulted by despotic ignorance ; we have seen the right hand of fellowship, which you held out to the world, rejected by those who riot on its plunder.

“ We now behold you a Nation provoked into defence ; and we can see no mode of defence equal to that of establishing the general freedom of Europe.

“ In this best of causes we wish you success—our hearts go with you—and in saying this, we believe, we utter the voice of MILLIONS.

“ Signed, by Order of the Society,

“ JOHN CARTWRIGHT, Chairman.

“ D. ADAMS, Secretary.”

(40)

PROPOSITIONS respecting the FOUNDATION of CIVIL GOVERNMENT; by THOMAS COOPER. Read at the Literary and Philosophical Society of MANCHESTER, on March 7, 1787, and first published in the Transactions of that Society, vol. 3, p. 481. Anno 1790.

I HAVE often thought that the natural rights of mankind and the equitable principles of civil government, might be stated somewhat more briefly than I have anywhere seen them. With this view I have drawn up the following paper, containing the substance of many important discussions concerning the great outlines of civil liberty. It is of great consequence in my opinion, that a subject in which every member of society is so immediately interested, should be treated if possible so plainly as to be generally understood, and so briefly as to be easily remembered. I cannot say, however, that I have accomplished my own ideas in these respects; but where I have failed, I hope some other will succeed. At any rate, different modes of stating the same points cannot but have their use, especially on a subject so important, and of such direct and extensive application.

PROP. I. The right of exercising political power is either derived entirely from the consent of the people over whom it is exercised, or it is not. If not, from whence it is derived?

Ten answers may in effect be given to this question: of which the most part have already been proposed and defended respectively by writers expressly on the subject.

1. It has been said to be of divine appointment—derived from God.

But which particular government is of divine appointment?* What particular form of government did he appoint? To what man, or set of men, did he concede this

political

* I have sometimes stated the medium of proof directly, and sometimes in the form of a question, as it occurred. The latter mode is often shorter and more familiar.

political authority? What were the terms of the grant? Was it to him or them only to whom it was originally granted, or to their posterity also? Over how many men, or how many nations was this dominion to be excrcised? What evidence have we of the existence of the grant at all? Do any of the present rulers throughout the univerfe derive their right from this fource, mediately or immediately? May it not be said of every usurper, as well as of the most legitimate monarch, " the powers that be are ordained of God?" All these questions may be put, and ought to be resolved before this answer can be admitted, but I have not hitherto met with a folution of any them. And it is to be observed, that no claim of this kind can be admitted which is not clear, precise, and incontrovertible. Nor does the burden of proof lie upon the people. If a fellow-creature informs me, that I and my posterity are bound to obey his commands, it is not for me to prove that I am not fo bound, but for him to prove that I am.

2. *From patriarchal authority and successive delegation from the patriarchs.*

This is the exploded hypothesis of Sir R. Filmer; but granting for a moment, what can never be established, the right of the patriarchs to govern during the period of their existence, who can prove a right in them to transmit their power to others who come not under the fame venerable description, or the uninterrupted descent, or succession, of those who would now arrogate the transmission?

3. *From parental authority: the head of a family who first settled in any country having the right of governing his descendants.*

This is somewhat similar to the proceeding source of political dominion: at any rate, however, it can only extend over the progeny of the living parent; a delegation to the eldest brother for instance, or to any other person, not being of this description. But granting for a moment this right of delegation in the head of a family, to how many fucceſſive generations does it extend? Or how can it apply to the present circumstances of political affairs in any nation whatever? Moreover, as the chief if not the only good reaſons that can be affigned for ſubmiſſion in ſuch a caſe to parental authority, is, the greater experience of age, and the greater incitemeſt from parental affection to act with a ſole view to the good of the family, this authority muſt ceafe

cease with the life of the parent, because the reasons themselves for the submission will then cease: for without the gift of supernatural foresight no man can tell what new cases will arise in the succeeding generation, or what kind of a governor his immediate successor will prove: and every generation weakens almost to annihilation the mere tie of parental affection. But farther, on what ground can a parent, even during life, claim the absolute direction of conduct over a son of forty years of age for instance? Suppose the son should think the parent wrong and himself right, ought he to act according to the dictates of his own conscience, or according to the commands of a father possibly of less understanding, and of decayed faculties? In fact it is now universally agreed that there are cases and times when parental authority ceases to become absolute, and changes into advice.

4. *The acquiescence of a parent under any existing government binds the family.*

(a.) This does not relate to the *origin and foundation* of civil government, for there could be no such acquiescence before the government in question existed. (b) The parent cannot bind the son to perpetual submission even to parental authority, and much less to the authority of others. (c) If this source of authority were well founded, then would the acquiescence of a parent under tyranny and despotism, bind the son to obey likewise. (d) It is always allowed that no parent can deprive his son of his *personal rights*; he may limit what belongs to himself, the property he means to transmit, as he pleases; but he has no right to what belongs to the son. (e) This source would preclude all additions to, or diminutions of, the governing power, in any way whatever after the death of the father; for to such, the parental acquiescence could not apply, and the then government would no longer be binding. (f) All the objections to the last answer (the third) apply in substance to this. (g) This answer, like the rest, is a *gratis dictum*; an unproved assertion.

5. *The personal acquiescence of the governed, under the government existing.*

If such an acquiescence be the result of force, and inability to resist, it amounts to nothing, and is no real acquiescence. If it be voluntary, it amounts to an implied assent, and then the persons governed are so governed with their own consent. As applied to the *origin of government*, this source

source of authority thus expressed cannot be admitted; for none then existed.

6. It may be said that men are BORN subjects of some particular state, and that in consequence of this, they owe perpetual allegiance to the government thereof.

This has been, and still is said, but it has never been proved. (b) It applies not to the origin of government, and before the particular state in question was constituted: and it may here be observed once for all, that as none of the nations upon earth has existed as a political community from all eternity, every such political community must have had an origin, or beginning of some kind; and if the political dominion was improperly obtained by the governors originally, the forcible continuance of it by their successors, cannot make their authority equitable. Long continuance cannot alter the nature of iniquity and convert it into justice. (c) This source of dominion would satisfy the grossest tyranny and despotism. (d) It may well be denied that there is any thing in the mere circumstance of being born in this or that part of the globe, that can equitably subject any one to the perpetual government of any other of his fellow-creatures: and if it be placed upon the circumstance of the parents being subjects, the preceding objections to *parental acquiescence*, apply. (e) This answer converts human beings into a species of property. (f) It is contrary to the maxim, that allegiance and protection are reciprocal, for a man may renounce protection. (g) It makes the people born for the government, instead of the government being created for the people.

7. Is it not derived from prescription, from long continuance? No: for it could not have been of long continuance when it was first exercised; and if it could, prescription gives no right but in the positive institutes of municipal law; even there, *series annorum non conferat errorum*.

8. Does not actual power, the possession of force give right? No: for if so, then is any man justified in despoiling another, provided the first be the stronger. Moreover if might give right, then ought every parent of sixty or seventy to be in absolute subjection to his more powerful son of thirty.

9. From conquest.

With respect to the original derivation of civil authority this claim is nugatory: conquest must necessarily have been posterior to communities, or conquest itself could not have been.

Conquest

Conquest, however, is in all cases pursued either (*a*) for the mere purposes of ambition and increase of territory: or (*b*) in pursuit of a war in some other way unjustly commenced on the part of the conquerors: or (*c*) to compel restitution for a national injury committed; or (*d*) to prevent any farther attempt of the same kind where there is good ground to suspect such an intention.

In the cases (*a*) and (*b*) conquest can never support the claim in question; for an act of injustice can never be the foundation of an equitable right.

In the case (*c*) if the vanquished nation make restitution, no farther claim lies against them, and it seldom if ever happens that restitution cannot be made. If not, then it may be granted that the conquering nation may dispose of, or detain such part of the territorial possessions of the vanquished as are sufficient to satisfy the damage sustained. But when *personal* resistance has ceased, no claim can exist against the *persons* of the vanquished, and *à fortiori* none against their children and descendants. This case, therefore, furnishes no ground for the right to political authority and permanent dominion. With respect to the territory detained, the original inhabitants who choose to remain, or others who accept or purchase portions thereof, do so upon certain terms; so that the power over them must be derived from compact, *i. e.* their own consent. These observations will apply also to the case (*d*).

10. *But do not superior abilities, or superior attainments confer the right of ruling?*

No: for (*a*) there is just the same reason for a person's interference in my private business, because he pretends to know more of it than I do, as there is for his interference in my public business on the same pretence. (*b*) Moreover, has the community or the individual the right of deciding who possesses such? Surely not the latter, or the claims would be infinite; and if the former, then for whatever reason the authority is conferred, it is derived from the consent of the community. (*c*) Public transactions do not require more than ordinary talents. A man of common understanding with the requisite application to the necessary studies, is as equal to the public as to the private departments of life. (*d*) This scheme would introduce all the evils of competition. (*e*) Connections and riches would perpetually interfere, so as to render the choice impracticable on the sole ground of ability. (*f*) In a large community

nity it would be impossible to determine who had the best title on this score.

Beside these I think no other sources of political authority can be pointed out; and as none of these appear to furnish sufficient ground for the claim, but are all subject to insuperable objections, I conclude, that *the right of exercising political power, whether about to commence or actually existing, is derived solely from the people.* Of course, wherever such power is exercised, unless by virtue of a compact express, or upon sufficient ground implied, such exertion is **TYRANNY.**

II. But the people (*i. e.* a multitude of individuals) can have no right to exercise power, authority, or dominion over a fellow-creature, in their collective capacity, except in those cases where they had such a right in their capacity of individuals. The *people* is a term, expressing an aggregate of individuals; and the rights of the people (previous to compact) are no other than the aggregate of the rights belonging in common to the individuals who compose the people. If any other rights be ascribed to *the people*, whence are they derived? Excepting therefore such cases as these, viz. the right of parental dominion until manhood; the right of bodily coercion to prevent an injury being offered; the right of repelling an injury attempted; and the right of compelling restitution for an injury committed, it will follow from this and the first proposition, that no power, authority, or dominion can justly be exercised over any individual which has not been precedently derived from his own consent. Cases of infancy, idiocy, lunacy, coverture, and others similar, are evidently included in the preceding exception: such persons also being either naturally or by compact, *sui incomptes*, incapable of self-direction. With respect however to unmarried women at years of discretion, the common practice of nations appears to be inequitable, and perhaps indeed to the married.*

III. The

* Since these Propositions were first published, I have repeatedly considered the Subject of the Rights of Women, and I am perfectly unable to suggest any Argument in support of the political Superiority so generally arrogated by the Male Sex, which will not equally apply to any System of Despotism of Man over Man. The first of these PROPOSITIONS ON CIVIL GOVERNMENT, is just as applicable to Women as to Men. The fact is, that we behave to the female sex, much in the same Manner as we behave to the Poor. We first keep their Minds, and then their Persons in Subjection. We educate Women from Infancy to Marriage, in such a Way as to debilitate both their corporeal and their mental powers. All the accomplishments we teach them are directed, not to *their* future benefit in Life, but to the Amusement of the Male Sex; and having for a Series of Years with much affiduity,

III. The authority of the governors, is derived from the consent of the governed. But no man can reasonably be presumed, voluntarily to have delegated to another any dominion over himself, but for his own good; and in expectation of something in return at least equivalent to the concession. Nor can any man be supposed to prefer the state of civil society, but with a prospect of living more happily upon the whole by becoming a member of such a state, than otherwise. Hence, the happiness of the community (*i. e.* of the individuals who compose it) is the great end and object of civil society; and the regulations adopted, are or ought to be, no other than the means to that end.

IV. Farther, as no man can reasonably be presumed to have made a voluntary surrender of any right previously enjoyed, or to have submitted voluntarily to any subjection, but in expectation that in the sum of happiness upon the whole he would be no loser by so doing; it follows, that no right can be presumed to be given up, or any dominion delegated, but what is absolutely necessary to attain the great object of civil society, *viz.* his own happiness in common with that of the other individuals who have done the same: otherwise we must suppose a voluntary concession of rights for the benefit of others, and a voluntary subjection to the will of others without an expected equivalent in return: which, except in the cases of family connections, or obligations conferred, or peculiar friendship, is absurd.

V. Also, wherever it can be made highly probable that from the nature of civil society, it cannot afford an equivalent for any particular right supposed to be surrendered, we

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may

and sometimes at much expence, incapacitated them for any serious Occupation, we say they are not fit to govern themselves, and arrogate the right of making them our Slaves thro' Life. Thus we too frequently wed play things, and not Friends and Companions; and we in our turn are the Dupes of cunning, and the Victims of all the petty passions, as a just reward for the Tyrannical Maxims we are at such pains to inculcate. I have read the Writings of Mrs. M. Graham, of Miss Wolttencroft, of Mrs. Barbauld, of Mrs. Montague, Miss Carter, Miss Seward, Mrs. Dohson, Mrs. Williams, &c. in England—I have conversed with Theroigne, with Madame Condorcet, Madame Robut, Madame Lavoisier, &c in Paris. I have often felt my own Inferiority, and often lamented the present iniquitous and most absurd notions on the Subject of the disparity of Sexes. I have conversed with politicians, and read the writings of politicians, but I have seldom met with views more enlarged, more just, more truly patriotic; or with political reasonings more acute, or arguments more forcible, than in the Conversation of Theroigne, and the Writings of Miss Wolttencroft. *Let the Defenders of male Despotism answer, if they can "THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN."*

may fairly conclude that such right never was or could have been surrendered. Thus the right of a man to the exclusive society of his wife, the right of a parent to educate his children in his own way, the right of following the dictates of conscience in matters of religion, the right of resisting a sudden attempt to deprive one of life, &c. are such as have no equivalent to my knowledge in any thing that society can bestow. It cannot therefore in equity be presumed that these rights are renounced on becoming a member of political society, nor can society be presumed to require the renunciation of that, which it cannot purchase by an equivalent.

VI. By Prop. III. & seq. wherever the power or dominion delegated is inconsistent with the object of civil society, for which alone it was delegated, the persons delegating must have a right of recalling or annulling partially or totally, as circumstances may require, that power which no longer answers the ends of its creation. *Cessante ratione cessat et ipsa lex.* Hence also, the propriety of frequent revisions of political constitutions. For experience alone can determine the kind and degree of power which is absolutely necessary and no more, to effect the purposes of civil society. With respect to which indeed our knowledge hitherto seems in its infancy.

VII. In case of any dispute respecting authority claimed, the burden of proof lies rigorously upon the claimants. For it is strictly incumbent on every man before he acts, to be certain that he is not about to do an act of injustice, more especially if the slightest intimation be given that this may be the consequence. Nor is it at all incumbent on those who are the objects of exerted authority to prove that no such authority equitably exists; for it is indisputable that no man is bound to prove a negative. Experience moreover shews the liability to abuse of entrusted authority, and the consequent propriety of insisting on this condition.

VIII. For the same reason, wherever the renunciation of a right on the part of the governed, is claimed by the governors as necessary to the ends of society, it is incumbent on the latter (more especially if required) to point out clearly the necessity alledged. Exerted authority, where the propriety demanded is not shewn, is the same as if it were improperly (*i. e.* tyrannically) exerted. *De non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio.*

IX. Nor can the renunciation of any right be demanded of one individual which may not be equally required of every other individual of the community, otherwise society will be benefited at the expence of an act of injustice; for it ought to be presumed that every member of a community enters into it upon equal terms with the rest, there being no reason in the nature of the thing, why some should be supposed to join voluntarily in a society under peculiar disadvantages, or to consent that exclusive privileges should belong to others.

X. Hence if from peculiar circumstances the good of the community require that some part of its members should give up certain of their rights, or be in any way restrained in the enjoyment of them, this can only be insisted on in the way of purchase; and a full equivalent is due to those who thus contribute to the good of the community out of the common proportion of the rest of its members. Of course, where society has no equivalent to bestow in return for the renunciation or restriction of any right on the part of such of its members from whom it is expected, this renunciation or restriction cannot be compelled without an act of injustice.

XI. Neither is it to be presumed that on entering into society we have surrendered the right of doing that, which, independent of society and antecedent thereto, it was our duty to perform. A debt from *A* to *B* can never be cancelled by any agreement between *A* and *C* wherein *B* is no way concerned. It is a duty (for instance) incumbent upon every man, whether he be or be not a member of society to worship God in that way which his judgment points out as the most proper; nor can any compact express or implied between him, and others of his fellow-creatures justify any breach whatever of his duty to his Creator.

XII. Moreover as the intent or end of society is the promotion of the happiness of the individuals who compose it, and as the benefits of society can extend to or be enjoyed during a part of our existence only—we may infer generally, that the means of promoting our happiness in society (*i. e.* the regulations we submit to therein) ought to coincide with the means we are to use for promoting our happiness upon the *whole* of our existence, and when political society with respect to us, shall be no more. Otherwise society, instead of adding to our happiness upon the whole, would decrease it, and the sole object of its institution would be defeated.

XIII. It

XIII. It is to be observed, however, that we are not permitted to do evil that good may come; for any enormity might be justified upon such a pretence. So that, if any person under an idea that he is performing a duty of superior obligation to those of society, does an injury to the person or the property of his neighbour, it will be perfectly consistent with the ends of society that such person be punished; not indeed under the notion of preventing his obedience to the dictates of his conscience, but upon the general ground of preventing and repressing injurious conduct. For without this the ends of society could never be accomplished, nor could society itself exist; while the punishment of the person injuring, on the other pretence, viz. because we think his conscience is misinformed would be a gross act of injustice; and equally applicable against ourselves as against him. Moreover the right of repelling an injury, would have belonged to the person injured on whatever pretence it were offered, had society never existed. This reasoning is agreeable to the common axioms of, *sic utere tuo ut alieno non lades.* And, rights inconsistent with, or destructive of each other, cannot exist.

The six last propositions, are applicable to the subject of *religious liberty.*

XIV. Society is intended to promote the happiness of the individuals who compose it. Hence the interest (i. e. the happiness) of the majority, is to be preferred to that of the minority. Otherwise society would produce a decrease, and not an addition to the sum of temporal happiness. It is possible indeed, that promoting the interest of the minor part, might in some particular case produce a degree of happiness equal to ten, while promoting the interest of the major-part, in that particular case might produce a degree of happiness equal only to nine. In such a case the degree ten ought perhaps to be preferred. But as we are not in possession of a sufficient number of data, in the present state of human affairs, to ascertain such a point as this, it cannot practically be noticed. So that the general rule in this proposition holds true.

XV. Hence, excepting those rights which it would be inconsistent with the ends of society to renounce, or that are unnecessary to the ends of society, or connected with duties of prior or superior obligation to those of society—the interest of any one or any number of individuals constituting

tuting the minority only, must be presumed to be conceded where it interferes with the interest of the majority.

XVI. Hence also, for every practical purpose the majority is synonymous with the society.

XVII. The same reasons will hold with respect to all those cases where the opinions of the individuals who compose the society, are requisite concerning any proposed means of compassing the ends of society. For if the opinions of the few were in all cases to be deemed of equal weight with the opinions of the many, the object of society would be perpetually frustrated, nor could society itself long exist.

XVIII. Moreover, in all cases where the sentiments of the majority cannot be ascertained *numeratim* or individually, it must of necessity be presumed that an *active* majority is a true majority: for where every one may be active who chuses, the presumption is equal on both sides of the question concerning those who are apparently neuter. Hence, whenever an opportunity is given to all, publicly to signify their sentiments on any general questions, the majority of those who thus actually signify their sentiments, ought to be accounted the majority of the whole.

XIX. But as it is impossible even for the majority of a society, to act individually without such confusion as would defeat the end of the assembly, unless in very small communities, a few must of necessity be deputed to act for the many.

The propositions respecting majorities, will of course hold true concerning these (comparative) few.

XX. The few, thus deputed to act for the many, of course also, receive all their authority from their constituents, for there is no other source, consistent with the maxim already exhibited.

XXI. As this authority is conceded for some end or purpose, it must of course be limited in extent and duration by the end or purpose for which it was created: hence the persons deputing, must have a right remaining of extending or limiting, continuing or annulling the delegated authority, as the circumstances for which it was granted may from time to time require. Also, as the happiness of the community and not merely of the representatives or persons deputed, constitute the object of society, the majority of the community, *i. e.* of the persons deputing, must have the right of judging of these circumstances.

XXII. If

XXII. If therefore the persons deputed extend their authority in continuance or degree, either beyond what the circumstances require for which it was delegated; or beyond or without or against the inclinations of the majority of the persons deputing them, the rights of the latter are infringed and they are injured.

XXIII. But every man who does an injury to another, of whatever kind or to whatever extent, is accountable to the person injured, who may demand redress. Hence whenever the persons deputed exercise their authority inconsistently with the ends for which it was committed to them, they are accountable to the people who committed it. but as the people who committed it retain the right of judging whether it be properly exerted or not, the persons to whom it is committed are accountable to the people universally. That is, the governors of whatever description in every society upon earth are accountable to the governed.

XXIV. By Prop. I. and II. no person can justly exercise any power or dominion over another, but what is pre-
cedently derived from that other: nor indeed can any other definition in substance be given of slavery than, "that state
" or condition in which a man is governed without* his
" consent." Sometimes indeed the cases may be so few and the degree so slight, that it passes unnoticed. But that the essence of slavery is such as above described, will be evident to any one who will be at the pains of thinking on the subject. Hence if any member of a society is deprived of the means of assenting or dissenting, either by himself or his representative, to the regulations of that society to which he is at the same time obnoxious in quality of being a member thereof; or if through any circumstances which do not affect the individuals of the community in common as well as himself, or to which he hath not had an opportunity of previously assenting, his assent or dissent is rendered ineffectual, such person is clearly under a dominion and rule which is not ultimately derived from himself: his state with respect to those regulations and the executive officers of them, is a state of slavery, and the enforcement of those regulations with respect to him is tyranny. Nor is the nature of the thing changed because others are sufferers as well as himself, or because the tyranny is only exerted to a certain degree.

XXV. The

*Not, "against," for this may consist with freedom.

XXV. The case of a stranger, not permanently resident, is hardly an exception to the preceding proposition, for by the terms, such an one is not a member of the society in question, but of some other. And, in fact, his voluntary residence in or passage through the territory of any society but his own, amounts to an assent for the time to the regulations of that society which he thus voluntarily enters.

XXVI. It is a question, however, much more difficult to determine, whether the right of suffrage, should be in any degree regulated by the possession of *property*, or be considered as a right simply attached to the *person*. For my own part, after much consideration, I incline to think that a line of exclusion *may* be drawn, and that no injustice is done by debarring those from voting in the choice of national representatives, who on account of their poverty, are exempted from the payment of all taxes. For, first, no person can demand to interfere in framing laws, who contributes nothing to the expence of enacting or enforcing them. Secondly, Nor can any one demand this, who possesses no ostensible pledge that he will submit to the execution of them. Thirdly, By far the greatest part of laws relate to objects in which such a person has no interest. For instance, it is absurd to give a right of legislating concerning the property of others to those who have none of their own; and who risk nothing on the event of their own regulations. Fourthly, A certain quantity of territory is essentially necessary to the existence of a political community; and it is optional to the possessors thereof, to admit or reject as members of the community upon their own terms, those who have no proprietary or usufructuary right to any such territory; provided also it be left optional to the latter, to accept or reject a membership on the terms proposed. Fifthly, As so large a portion of the laws of every community consist of regulations concerning property, the right of suffrage ought to be considered as connected with both the objects of law, viz. persons and property. Even if two separate legislatures were provided, one for a *civil*, and the other for a *criminal code*, yet would the preceding objections hold with respect to the latter. Sixthly, the exclusion on the ground above-mentioned, would extend to so small a portion of the society, that where the representation is adequate there would be little chance but the regulations adopt-

ed would accord with the inclinations of a majority of the *whole* community.

To the preceding reasons may be added, the difficulty of ascertaining who had or had not voted before any particular district, if mere personality gave this right—the probable suspicion of want of knowledge and independence in this class of people—the consideration that those who enjoyed the right in question, would be equally interested with the persons excluded, as to those laws in which alone the latter could claim an interest—the stimulus to exertion, which the exclusion itself would furnish—and the superior facility with which the suffrages of a community could be collected, if confined to householders paying (as the term is in England) scot and lot.

Notwithstanding however I incline upon the whole to the propriety of such an exclusion as here proposed, I still think the subject requires more discussion than has yet been given it; and that to make the exclusion itself equitable, no punishment ought to be enjoined involving the class excluded, which every other individual would not be equally subject to, for the same crime; and also that no regulations ought to be made respecting the individuals of the class thus excluded, and those of any other, which in their operation would not be equally beneficial to both; and lastly, that free egress out of the community should be allowed to all those who are disinclined to stay in it; in which case perhaps an implied consent may fairly be presumed on the part of those who voluntarily remain.*

XXVII. This last condition is indeed contrary to a maxim (I believe) universal among municipal lawyers, viz. that “the natural born subject of a state is under an obligation “to perpetual allegiance”—a maxim (already noticed in Prop. I. and) beyond all doubt absurd and tyrannical—absurd in as much as all civil society is founded on compact, and no compact can be valid unless between parties able and willing to contract; but the mere fortuitous circumstance of being born here or there in this state or that, is not under the control of the native at the time, nor is ability or willingness then predicable concerning him; nor can any right be

* The reader will have seen, that having thought more maturely upon the subject, I have changed my opinion for reasons already assigned. I leave the passage here as it stands, because it contains a summary of the arguments on the side of the question which I have abandoned.

be shewn in a parent to make an indefeasible contract on the part of his child, to be performed when the latter is no longer under the controul of the former: tyrannical this maxim is, because whatever may be the government, however despotic in principles or practice, it arrogates perpetual indefeasible dominion, underived from the consent, express or implied, of the person governed. This particular question however I shall treat expressly much more at large, at some future opportunity.

XXVIII. The preceding propositions have been deduced abstractedly from the consideration of any particular society, and appear to hold universally true concerning society itself; and therefore where a civil society is already formed, these propositions ought to be considered as the terms and foundations of the implied compact among the members; the opposite propositions being inequitable. Hence whether a man is about to enter for the first time as a member of any political community; or whether (fortuitously with respect to himself) he finds himself already a member of such a community, his rights are still the same, and all dominion over him must ultimately be derived from his own consent expressly given or equitably implied.

XXIX. Wherever therefore any political government is not constituted and exercised in conformity to this grand maxim, "that all power is derived from the people," and the evident consequences deducible from that maxim—the governed are injured; and deprived of rights, which may be proved to belong to them. So that the people in every nation upon earth, may justly demand that the government under which they live, be altered in conformity to that maxim, wherever it is not so already.

XXX. But it is universally allowed, that wherever a right exists, there exists also concomitantly, a right to the means of obtaining it; else the right itself is nugatory. So that if any right belonging to the people, should be forcibly infringed, or withheld from them by the governors of any community, after repeated applications for redress in a peaceable way, the former have a right forcibly to obtain it.

XXXI. Also from Prop. VI. and XXI. it may be deduced universally that whenever any alteration in the form of government, or change in the officers of government appears eligible to the majority of the people, they have a right to insist on such alteration or change, whether the

officers before appointed were temporary or hereditary. For, whether the office itself, or the officers, answer the purpose of their appointment, must be decided either by the governors or the governed. This right of determination ought not to belong to the former, because they not only may, but generally have an interest opposite to the welfare of the whole community—the honours, the power and the emoluments annexed to offices of government, being universally desirable, the possessors will be perpetually induced to support their own continuance in the enjoyment of them, whether necessary or otherwise to the ends of society. The people however *can* have no interest but that of the community at large (*i. e.* of themselves) and of course can have no other object in determining, but the object itself for which society was formed.

The will of the people therefore (*i. e.* of the majority) ascertained as correctly as the nature of the case will admit is of itself a sufficient reason for any change whatever, in the constitution of a kingdom or the officers of government.

XXXII. As the people have this right, they have also a right to the means of enabling them to exercise it: otherwise (as I have observed before) the right itself is nugatory; a mere name. Hence after every peaceable method of obtaining any political change, has been repeatedly used in vain on the part of the people, the latter will be justified in rising to *compel* an obedience to their commands.

XXXIII. But as it cannot be supposed that the majority of the people will rise at one and the same instant of time, some must rise before others. So that if the common and peaceable methods to obtain a compliance with the requisitions of the people, have been unsuccessfully repeated, any number of men however small are justified in making a beginning, where a beginning must necessarily be made: nor can any general reasonings, nor do any historical facts warrant the opinion that such changes or alterations will ever be attempted on light ground: that burden must be heavy indeed which a whole people unite to shake off.

XXXIV. But as every member of society ought to aim at the welfare of the community, and of course should endeavour to produce the greatest balance of good upon the whole; in case any alteration although desirable to the majority of the nation, if attempted by force, is likely to produce a considerable degree of resistance from the officers in

power,

power, the good to be obtained by the alteration ought to be compared with the evils likely to ensue from the enforcement of it; and if the latter, *obviously* preponderate, no man can be justified in attempting such alteration by force at *that opportunity*.

In all cases however it is to be considered in the comparison, that the evils, will most probably afflict the present generation only: the good, will most probably endure to posterity for an indefinite length of time. Thus England enjoys the benefit of the exertions of the people under the tyrants John, Charles, and James even at this day: the evils of those exertions were confined to a generation or two.

Such are the *principal* deductions, from that grand maxim, the very corner stone of legitimate government, that *all power is derived from the people*. Deductions, which the rulers of the earth have seldom inclined to admit, as they tend to the abolition of usurped authority. But those only will inveigh against promulgating the civil rights of mankind, who either mean to infringe those rights, or have some interest or other in defending those who do. Sedition against the officers of government, is a fruitful source of criminal jurisdiction; while sedition against the majesty of the people, is a crime unknown to the penal code, and universally practised with impunity and in cases out of number arrogated as a right, by the servants of the people in every nation upon earth.

The structure of political oppression however, begins now to totter: its day is far spent: the extension of knowledge has undermined its foundations, and I hope the day is not far distant when in Europe at least, one stone of the fabric will not be left upon another.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 10. for Landon, read London
for Bergarac read Bergerac.

12. line 1, for "The" read "They"
15. line 23 from the top, after "They are" read "beginning to be"
16. line 2 from the bottom, for "true" read "mere"
17. line 31 from the top, for "opposite" read "opposing"
line last but one of the Note, for "Privileges" read "Priveleges"
19. line 13 from the top after "but" insert "to"
24. line 13 from the top for "ne" read "ni"
28. line 2 for "here" read "therefore"
37. line 5 from the bottom for "sufeior" read "superior"
43. line 30 from the top, for "twenty" read "forty" and for
"more than" read "near"
44. line 11 from the top, after "existence" read "even"
55. line 5 from the top, for "35,0000l." read "350,000l."
58. line 27 from the top, for "an annual losf" read "a loss"
65. line 10 from the top, for "Moreover" read "Farther"
69. line 6 from the top, for "new-found" read "new-formed"¹²
75. line last of Note the first, for "addition" read "edition"
76. line 29 from the top, for "Men" read "Man."